

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES
OF BUCKS COUNTY, PA.

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AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES OF BUCKS COUNTY, PA.

EDWARD R. BARNSLEY



DOYLESTOWN, PA.

1940

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The following article was read by the author at that meeting of Bucks County Historical Society held at Doylestown, September 30, 1939. and was printed in the Proceedings of the said Society, vol. VIII, p. 351, of which this pamphlet is one of a hundred copies reprinted therefrom.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETIES OF BUCKS COUNTY, PA.,

Including an Account of Public Fairs

and Live Stock Exhibitions

A detailed account of our several agricultural societies would form a most readable chapter in the otherwise dry social history of Bucks county, provided that such an account had been written. But so far as we know, local historians have heretofore practically neglected this very interesting and important phase of our rural life more than a century ago. It is therefore, our purpose this afternoon to present before the Bucks County Historical Society an abridged history of the events leading to the formation of Newtown's far-famed and noble-purposed Bucks County Agricultural Society whose famous exhibitions had their origin in the Eighteenth Century town fair, and were in turn outmoded by the present type of Twentieth Century county fair having essentially the same motives. Particularly do we want to show the apparent development of one agricultural society into another of different format and later date, as well as to memorialize the names of certain pioneer farmers who, in those intellectually dark days prior to the public school system, had the vision and courage to build such institutions for the improvement of husbandry and general advancement of agricultural education throughout the county.

The chief function of each of our agricultural societies was to manage a county fair. Even the concept of the word "fair" seems to have changed through the years like have so many other of our words in common use. Today we are apt to think of a fair as a mileless potpourri of trylons and flood-lighted futuramas, but in the yesterdays of our greatgrandfathers, a fair meant a cattle show, or exhibition of prize live stock usually followed by the sale thereof, with the accessory entertainment being kept more

or less in the background. Rosa Bonheur painted the old type fair; Billy Rose paints the new.

* * *

The social center of Bucks county for the first half century of its existence was, of course, at Bristol, named originally Buckingham. So we expected to find that fairs originated in that old town where were located the courts of justice and the greatest population. In the Great Charter of the Borough of Bristol that was granted by Governor William Keith on November 14, 1720¹ is found official authorization for the holding of a semi-annual fair, two days in the month of May, and three in October, "In such place or places as the burgess from time to time may appoint."² It is a great loss that no contemporaneous records exist

¹Bache, William, *Historical Sketches of Bristol Borough*, 1853, p. 17. The first and only extensive publication of the charter of Bristol borough was when Samuel Hazard reprinted it in the May, 1829 issue of his *Register of Pennsylvania*. He, no doubt, used for copy the original charter, which has long since been lost or destroyed. William Bache, great grandson of Benjamin Franklin, stated that he reprinted it in June, 1849, in his newly established *Bristol Gazette*. No copies, however, of this newspaper have been preserved. The paragraph from the charter relating to markets and fairs reads: "And we do further grant to the said Burgesses and Inhabitants of the aforesaid town and Borough of Bristol, That they and their successors shall and may for ever hereafter, hold and keep within the said town in every week of the year one market on the 5th day of the week called Thursday; and also two fairs there in every year: the first of them to begin the eighth Day of May, and to continue that day and one day after; and the other of said fairs to begin the twenty-ninth Day of October, and to continue till the thirty-first day of the same month, in such place and places in the said town as the Burgess from time to time may appoint." This type of fair can be traced back to the early English settlement of the Delaware Valley, and perhaps even earlier. When Gabriel Thomas published in 1698 his *Historical and Geographical Account Of The Province and Country Of Pensilvania And Of West New Jersey In America*, he stated that Philadelphia "hath in it Three Fairs every Year, and Two Markets every Week," and that the "Four Great Market-Towns, viz, Chester, the German Town, New-Castle, and Lewis-Town" also had fairs in them. He then continues in another place to say that in Burlington, "the chiefest Town in that Countrey," i.e., West New Jersey, "There are kept also in this Famous Town several Fairs every Year." The *Bristol Courier* of March 4, 1940 contains a reprinting of the Great Charter, as recorded in the above mentioned edition of Hazard's *Register*, vol. III, p. 312.

²Davis, W. W. H., *History of Bucks County*, 1876, p. 341. The borough of Trenton, N. J., apparently had a similar fair; witness this advertisement from the *Pennsylvania Journal or Weekly Advertiser*, published at Philadelphia on October 3, 1745: "These are to give Notice, that on Wednesday the 16th of this Instant October, at the Burrough Town of Trenton, in the County of Hunterdon in the Province of New Jersey, will be held and kept a Fair, in the selling and buying of all and all Manner of Horses, Mares, Colts, Cows, Calves, Steers, Hogs, Sheep, and all other Cattle, Goods,

to inform us about the details of this early fair, for its administration by the Borough authorities under the direction of the burgess was a curious and perhaps unique set-up.

Because of the absence of county newspapers, and the fact that few in rural Bucks county subscribed to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, this fair does not seem to have been advertised much in the newspapers. (We did not, however, search all the City papers for all the years of the period concerned.) Anyway, the fair was always held at a certain time, like Christmas, so how could one forget such an important date? We did, though, find one advertisement in Franklin and Hall's paper for the fair that was held 180 years ago. On October 4, 1759, the *Gazette* stated:

"For the Benefit of the Public, Notice is hereby given, that the Fair of Bristol Borough, in Bucks County, will be held on the 9th Day of November next, agreeable to Charter; for the buying and selling of all Sorts of live Cattle: The first Attempt of this Kind was made at the last May Fair, and succeeded beyond Expectation, there being a Number of Horses sold, and several horned Cattle. It is hoped there needs not many Arguments to evince the Utility of such a Practice to the Public in general. All Persons therefore, who have Cattle of any Kind, Horses, Oxen, Cows, Sheep, &c. to dispose of, and all who want to purchase such, are hereby invited to promote their several Interests, by meeting and attending said Fair, where proper Accommodations for the standing of Cattle will be provided."

It is indeed unfortunate that we are not able to trace the varying fortunes of the first fair to be held in Bucks county. All we know is that it degenerated pretty rapidly toward the close of what is now called the colonial period. Only fourteen years after the sanguine announcement that "there needs not many Arguments

Wares and Merchandizes whatsoever; Which said Fair will be held and kept the same Day above mentioned, and two Days next following, pursuant to a Clause in a Charter of Priviledges lately granted to the said Burrough Town for that Purpose." In the same paper, issue of April 19, 1750, we find the following: "The Charter of the Burrough of Trenton, being surrendered, and the said Surrender accepted by his Excellency in the following Words. 'By His Excellency Jonathan Belcher, Esq; Captain General and Governor in Chief, in and over His Majesty's Province of Nova Caesarea or New-Jersey, and Territories thereon depending in America, Chancellor and Vice Admiral in the Same, &c. Having perus'd and consider'd the within Instrument of surrender of the Charter for incorporating the Town of Trenton, I do therefore in behalf of His most sacred Majesty accept the same. Dated at the City of Burlington, in said Province, this ninth Day of April in the twentythird Year of His Majestys Reign, 1750. J. Belcher' Publick Notice thereof is hereby given to all Persons, to prevent their Trouble and Attendance upon the Fairs, which will not be held as usual."

to evince the Utility of such a Practice to the Public," the fair had gone completely to pieces. Perhaps more arguments would have been in order; but more than likely shift of population to the county seat at Newtown was the contributing factor in its downfall. Tradition tells us that fairs were held at Newtown during the latter part of this period, and if such was the case, the death of the Bristol fair was inevitable. Whatever the cause, we know that on November 10, 1773, the burgess and council of Bristol Borough resolved that the fair was useless on account of the large number of stores, and that the "debauchery, idleness and drunkenness consequent on the meeting of the lowest class of people together is a real evil, and calls for redress."³ No redress could be had, however, as the fairs were held by lawful charter. The opportunity to abolish them came after the Revolution, when the Borough was re-incorporated by an act of General Assembly passed September 16, 1785. But the privilege of continuing the long established fair was, for some reason undisclosed, renewed in this new charter, and it was not until eleven years later that the condition was permanently corrected.⁴ On April 4, 1796, an-

³Green, Doron, *History of Bristol*, 1911, p. 69. By this time the moral status of the previously mentioned fair held on the opposite side of the River was also bad. For an account of some articles stolen at the said Burlington fair, we quote this advertisement from the *Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser* of November 8, 1750. It is dated "Burlington, November 4, 1750", and is signed by Joseph Scattergood. "Notice is hereby given, that this Day was taken up in this City, an old Bag, containing a piece of Irish Linen, a few Yards of Kersey, a dressed Deer Skin, a pair of Shoemakers Nippers, and 2 Knives, which are supposed to have been stolen from some Person or Persons a Day or two since in the Fair, by a certain Samuel Norris of Bucks County, who is now here under Confinement, for a Crime of that Nature. Any Person or Persons who have lost the said Goods or any Part thereof, are desired immediately to repair to the Subscriber, who hath the same in Possession, that the Person guilty of the Theft may be brought to Justice, and the Person or Persons injured may be restored."

⁴Bache, William, *Historical Sketches of Bristol Borough*, pp. 23 and 26. The original act, as recorded in *Statutes at Large*, vol. XV, p. 461, reads: "Whereas the burgesses and common council [and] other inhabitants of the borough of Bristol and the adjoining townships, in the county of Bucks, have, by their petition, set forth that the fairs originally established by charter within the said borough have become useless and unnecessary, and promote licentiousness, vice and immorality, and have prayed that the same may be abolished. Therefore: Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That, from and after the passing of this act, so much and no more of any law or charter of this state as empowers the inhabitants of the borough of Bristol to hold and keep fairs within the same, is hereby repealed, annulled and made void."

other act was passed, "to annul and repeal so much of any charter or law of the State as empowers the inhabitants of the Borough of Bristol in the County of Bucks to hold and keep fairs within the same."

Such, in brief, is what we know about Bucks county's first public fair. It was distinctly one of those English products of the early Eighteenth Century which soon outlived its usefulness in this country, but because of its peculiar legal sanction, it was nursed into an unnaturally long life. No agricultural society could profitably sponsor a fair in Bucks county while this old Bristol fair continued to exist.

* * *

The Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture was founded as early as 1785, but it was not until twenty-four years later that the first definite attempt was made to start a similar society in our county. The date was December 30, 1809, the name adopted was The Bucks County Society for Promoting Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures, and the organizers were "Inhabitants of the Townships of Solebury and Buckingham."

Until last year, almost nothing was known about this pioneer association of central Bucks county farmers. It is true that their group held together for only two and a half years, but it is also true that their little group, feeble as it was, started the movement in the county which culminated in the great exhibitions of the mid-century. As pioneers in their field, these men deserve a place of honor today, and chief among them was Samuel D. Ingham⁵ who was chairman of the preliminary meeting held at his house. Mr. Ingham, benefitting from his experience in this society, became an active member of the 1820-society, and the first president of the 1843-society, until his removal to New Jersey forced his resignation.

About a year ago, the librarian of Bucks County Historical Society was able to purchase, for the price of the blank paper it included, the original minute book presented to the Agricultural Society by Samuel D. Ingham, and containing the minutes of

⁵See *Proceedings of Bucks County Historical Society*, Vol. I, p. 450, and Vol. IV, p. 19, for articles about Mr. Ingham. He was a member of the General Assembly, 1805-1807, and of Congress, 1813-1818 and 1822-1829. On July 6, 1810, Mr. Ingham was commissioned Secretary of the Commonwealth of the State of Pennsylvania.

those meetings held from December 11, 1809 to February 29, 1812, inclusive, and the complete constitution of the Society in the handwriting of Mr. Ingham, who later became Bucks county's favorite son in the cabinet of President Andrew Jackson. An examination of these minutes reveal that there were thirty-two resident members of the society. Their names were:

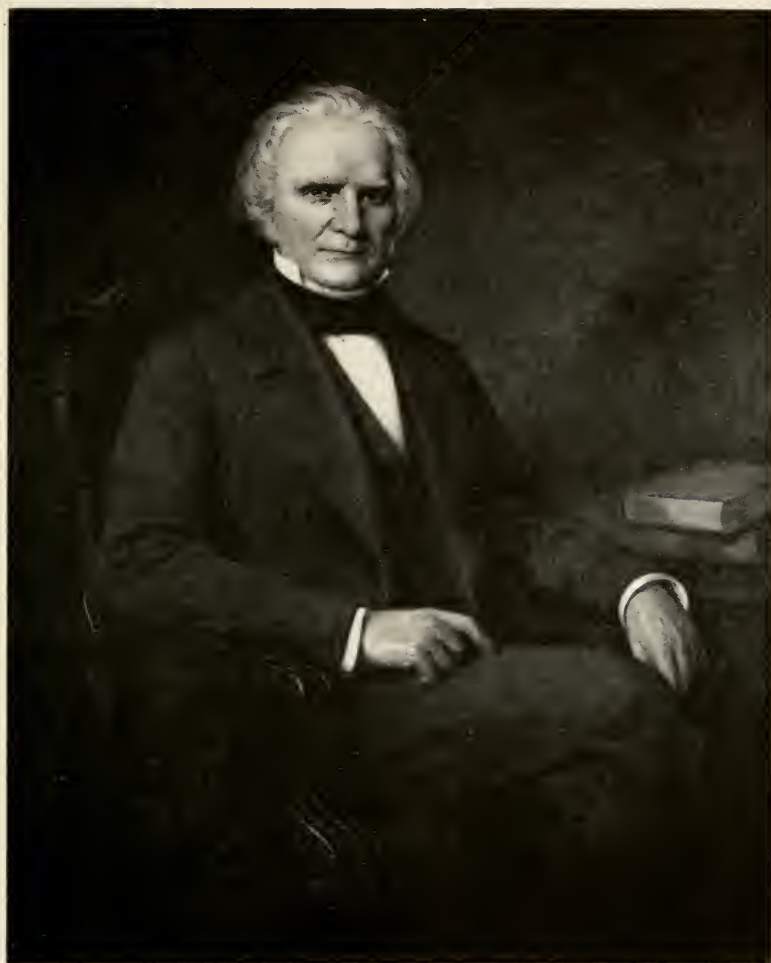
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| 1. ⁶ James Beers | 17. Jonathan W. Ingham |
| 2. ⁶ Abraham Chapman, Esq. | 18. Samuel D. Ingham |
| 3. Aaron Eastburn | 19. Samuel Johnson |
| 4. Amos Eastburn | 20. ⁶ John Lefferts |
| 5. Joseph Eastburn | 21. ⁶ Robert T. Neely |
| 6. Moses Eastburn | 22. John Parker |
| 7. John Ely, Jr. | 23. John Ruckman |
| 8. ⁶ William Erwine, Esq. | 24. ⁶ Benjamin Smith |
| 9. Charles D. Fell | 25. Jonathan Smith |
| 10. Jonathan Gillingham | 26. ⁶ Thomas Smith |
| 11. Samuel Gillingham | 27. Joseph Thornton |
| 12. William Gillingham | 28. John Watson, Jr. |
| 13. Oliver Hamton | 29. Joseph Watson |
| 14. John Hughs | 30. Dr. John Wilson |
| 15. ⁶ Thomas Hutchinson | 31. Stephen Wilson |
| 16. Hezekiah Ingham | 32. ⁶ Jonathan Wynkoop |

Following the example of the Philadelphia Society, this society also elected from time to time certain distinguished gentlemen, — usually from a distance, — to the roll of honorary members. The names of at least ten men so honored were:

1. ⁷Henry Clifton, Hunterdon co., N. J.
2. ⁷John Comley, Byberry, Pa.
3. George Farmer, Esq., Middlesex co., N. J.
4. ⁷Joseph Hart, Philadelphia, Pa.
5. John Kinsey, Little Brittain twp., Lancaster co., Pa.
6. Levi McKane, "Pawkepsy," N. Y.
7. ⁷Dr. James Mease, Philadelphia, Pa.

⁶These members joined after adoption of the constitution, December 30, 1809.

⁷These names were proposed, but their election was apparently not confirmed in later minutes. On May 26, 1810, the Society subscribed for two numbers of a work about to be published by Dr. James Mease, entitled "Archives of Useful Knowledge." It will be noted later that the 1820 society also had a library of some sort. See Sec. 11 of their second bye-law.



SAMUEL DELUCENNA INGHAM

Born in New Hope, Sept. 6, 1779; Died in Trenton, June 5, 1860.

An active member of all the agricultural societies of Bucks County. This illustration is from the steel engraving presented to Bucks County Historical Society in 1907 by his son, the late William A. Ingham, of Philadelphia; and the engraving was from the original painting hanging in the United States Treasury Department, of which he was the Secretary from 1829 to 1831.

8. Richard Peters, Esq.
9. John Skinner, near Edenton, N. C.
10. Dr. John Watson, Buckingham, Bucks co., Pa.

The preliminary meeting of the Society was held, on December 11, 1809, and a committee was appointed "to draft an essay of a Constitution for the regulation of said Association and produce it at the next meeting of the Society." The next meeting was held December 30, 1809 at Buckingham Friends schoolhouse, where all subsequent meetings, without exception, were held. Probably in lieu of paying rent for the schoolroom they contributed something towards its repair. At least on August 31, 1811, "Samuel Johnson produced an Acct for fitting up & repairing the room for use of this Society amounting to \$3.22 Cents which the Treasurer is directed to pay."

At the organization meeting of the 30th, the constitution was adopted⁸ and the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: Samuel Johnson, president; Dr. John Wilson, vice president; Oliver Hamton, secretary; and Aaron Eastburn, treasurer. A committee of correspondence, consisting of Samuel D. Ingham, Samuel Gillingham, Moses Eastburn, John Ruckman, and Jonathan Smith, was directed to draft a bill and apply to the General Assembly for an Act of Incorporation. The bill was presented before the next quarterly meeting, but apparently the move was premature, for nothing further is heard of it. Probably the Society was deemed too weak in finance and membership to warrant such a move by the Legislature. On May 26, 1810, the committee was directed to "digest a system of Finance", whatever that meant.

The first stated meeting of the Society was held on the last Seventh Day of February, 1810. Meetings continued quarterly thereafter to the end. Election of officers took place at the November meeting, when the annual dues of \$1.00 were payable. The initiation fee for new members was \$3.00.

At the meeting of February 24, 1810, "Sundry propositions were presented to the Society on agricultural subjects which were recommended to the individual attention of the Society & any

⁸Besides Ingham's manuscript copy referred to, the constitution was printed in Asher Miner's *Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser* of March 26, 1810. This was the only newspaper being published then in Bucks County.

member or members who may make any experiments thereon are requested to communicate the result thereof to a future meeting.' But what these "Sundry propositions" were, the minutes unfortunately do not state. This was the first mention of any discussion of agricultural matters. At the same time, the committee of correspondence was directed to get 150 certificates of membership printed "on a handsome scrip type." They reported at the next meeting that this had been done. According to the constitution the wording on these certificates was to be, "This may certify that A B was elected a member (or honorary member) of the Bucks County Society for promoting Agriculture and Domestic Manufacture on the —— day of —— A. D. ——." What a pity that not a single one of these certificates has survived to the present day!

At the second election held November 24, 1810, all the old officers and the old members of the committee of correspondence were re-elected for another year. Samuel D. Ingham then proposed the following resolution:

"Resolved, that a Committee be appointed to report to this Society on the general state of Agriculture & Manufactures in the County of Bucks & such other matters relating to the objects of this Institution from neighbouring Counties & States as they may think proper & the Corresponding Committee are directed to attend to the objects of said Resolution & report to a future meeting."

The committee of correspondence was also directed at this annual meeting to make arrangements for the holding of a fair for the sale of live stock. This was the first fair in Bucks county to be held under the auspices of an agricultural society.

At the quarterly meeting held May 25, 1811, the committee presented the following report, which was adopted and spread on the minutes:

"That in their opinion one of the chief objects of this association viz, the improvement of the various breeds of live Stock will be especially promoted by the establishment proposed.

"The committee would suggest that for the proper regulation of the proceeding at a Fair for the sale of Stock it may be expedient to appoint some superintending officers & adopt certain rules for their direction. The following are suggested for the consideration of the Society, viz, The Society shall at their meeting next preceeding the time of holding said Fair appoint a Committee of arangement who shall superintend generally

the business of the Fair & make all the necessary arrangements for the occasion.

"The Committee of arrangement shall employ a Clerk who shall keep accounts of sales & such other matters as may be required of him: also a Crier who shall make the publick sales that may be requisite. They shall also certify the pedigree of blood of such stock as may be offered at publick sale when the same can be particularly ascertained but if not the Crier shall announce the same at the time of sale. All moneys received by the Clerk for any animal sold at publick sale, & the pedigree or blood thereof certified by the Committee of arrangement shall remain in his hands ten days if the purchaser shall think such time necessary to ascertain the pedigree or blood of said animal & if it should be made appear to the Committee of arrangement that any mistake or deception should have been practised by the owner the purchaser on returning the animal shall receive his money without delay. The Committee of arrangement shall make report to the next succeeding meeting of the Society of the proceedings of the Fair & their opinion of the propriety of continuing the same & such other matters conected therewith as they may deem useful to communicate. Which report was unanimously adopted & John Ruckman, Joseph Eastburn & Moses Eastburn are appointed a Committee of arrangement for the purpose of carying into effect the matters contained in the foregoing report and they are hereby instructed to make the necessary preparation for holding said Fair & show at the house of John Ruckman at such time as they may think most proper agreeably to the aforesaid rules & regulations."

The *Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser* of July 29, 1811 carried this advertisement:⁹

BUCKS COUNTY FAIR.

"Pursuant to a resolution of the Bucks County Society for the promotion of Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures, the undersigned inform the public, that a Fair will be held at the house of John Ruckman, in Solebury township, (five miles from New-Hope and four from Mitchell's Ferry) on Friday the 23d of August, where a considerable number of the several kinds of live stock will be offered at public and private sale—viz. Horses, working Oxen, and Store Cattle: also a few Yearlings of the celebrated Bakewell breed, and a number of Sheep, consisting of full and mixed blood Merino rams, of highly improved Leicester, and also of the common breeds.

"An establishment of this kind will afford so convenient an opportunity to farmers for the sale, purchase, or exchange of Live Stock, that it cannot fail to promote their interest, and meet their approbation and encouragement.

⁹A note at the bottom of the advertisement reads: "The Editor of the *Trenton True American* will please re-publish the above, and continue it until the Fair." Possibly such haphazard advertising as this resulted in a small attendance which caused the committee of arrangements to report unfavorably on "the propriety of continuing" the fair in 1812.

"All those who may be disposed either to sell or buy stock of any description, are respectfully invited to attend.—Proper regulations will secure a due regard to the interests of the seller, and the buyer may be assured that all kinds of imposition in the public sales, will be strictly guarded against.

"By order of the Society above mentioned.

JOHN RUCKMAN,
MOSES EASTBURN,
JOSEPH EASTBURN,
Committee on Arrangement.

"N. B. Any person who may be in possession of an improved breed of Stock, of whatever kind, and will exhibit the same at the said fair, or give a particular description thereof in writing, to the Committee of Arrangement, will receive the cordial thanks of the Society."

A complete report of the first and only fair held by the original agricultural society of Bucks county in 1811 is not available. An extract of the report, however, appeared in the *Pennsylvania Correspondent* on September 16th following. Among the exhibits mentioned were those,

"By Dr. Isaac Clark, of Middlesex county, N. J., two Cows and Calves, and a yearling Heifer, all of the celebrated Holland milk breed; they were large and handsome, and sold for 46, 42 and 26 dollars respectively.

"By John Vanhorn, a Cow of the heavy big boned breed, sold for \$33.50.

"By Joseph Eastburn and others, the celebrated imported Bakewell English Bull, together with a number of his Calves, which were large and handsome, and very much resembled their sire in point of symmetry and beauty; one of them, a Heifer about six months and a half old, owned by Matthias Hutchinson, Esq. weighed on foot 492 lbs.

"By Samuel D. Ingham, Moses Eastburn, Aaron Eastburn and others, a great variety of elegant sheep, of the famed Merino and highly improved Leicester breeds, of different grades of blood, from half to full blood; some of which yet remain in the hands of the owners, who would dispose of them at a fair price.

"The Fair was attended by a numerous concourse of people, among whom were many characters of the first respectability.—Harmony and good order prevailed throughout the day."

The minutes of the meeting held August 31, 1811 reveal the receipt from different correspondents of five communications on interesting subjects, not one of which is preserved.

"Dr. Samuel Moore sent a communication in which he informed the Society he had a particular breed of Swine lately imported from China and described some of the properties. A communication on the preservation of Timber was produced by Aaron Eastburn. Also one by Thos. Hutchinson on harrow teeth. A Communication was also presented by Samuel Johnson on the properties of a late imported summer wheat. And one also by Dr. John Watson on the subject of preserving manure &c."

At the third election, Moses Eastburn was chosen vice president in place of Dr. John Wilson, and John Watson, jr., was elected secretary in place of Oliver Hamton. The other officers were re-elected. Three new members were elected on the committee of correspondence; namely, John Wilson, Joseph Eastburn, and Aaron Eastburn, in place of Moses Eastburn, John Ruckman, and Jonathan Smith. The last minutes of the Society in the minute book above referred to are those of February 29, 1812. The quarterly meeting to be held on the following August 29th was advertised in the *Pennsylvania Correspondent*, but after this no record of any further meeting is known. Apparently after two and half years of trying, the attempt to form a permanent society was given up.

The only known description of the Bucks County Society for Promoting Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures was written over a half century after its failure, by some resident of Newtown who remains unidentified under the pseudonym, "Agricola." In his letter to the editor of the *Newtown Enterprise*, which was published in the issue of October 1, 1868, the unknown author of *Reminiscences of the Original Agricultural Society of Bucks County* said:

"It is believed that the first impulse given to the Association last named was the introduction of Merino sheep into this country. The person who took the deepest interest in that movement, in our county, was Samuel D. Ingham—the honored president for a number of years of the modern society. By his magnetic influence a number of influential persons in the townships of Buckingham and Solebury, were convened by public notice, at the school house in Buckingham Township, near Buckingham Meeting House. The Society was organized, and took the unpretending name of the "Bucks County Society, for the Promotion of Agriculture." Its officers were Samuel Johnson, President; John Watson, Recording Secretary, and S. D. Ingham, Corresponding Secretary. Among the members were Dr. John Watson, the father of the Secretary—Robert Smith, Jonathan Ely, Sr., and a number of others, mostly in the vicinity, whom I do not now recollect. The meeting convened annually, and had a very limited attendance. Several

topics connected with farm-work, were occasionally discussed, but that which enlisted most interest, at the time, was the proper management, and selection of the kind of farm stock, of which the introduction and purchase first gave rise to the organization.

"As might be expected from the narrowness of the range of action, which the society contemplated, the proceedings were very void of interest, except to those concerned in the leading object of the Association. Having no Exhibition or premiums to offer,¹⁰ and not being able to afford other attractions, the Society endured a lingering and premature life, of a few years—its rise being coeval with the Merino excitement—and its exit, terminating with the extinction of the said speculating spirit. And neither its life nor death would be now noticed, but for the purpose of showing, by contrast, the magnificent utility of the present Agricultural Society.

"I cannot, however, forbear to relate an incident or two, at the early period to which I have referred. I do this with the more satisfaction, as they tend to show that even in the original movements of our associated farmers, the skillful hands of the female sex were brought into requisition.

"At the only meeting of the Society, which I even attended¹¹ (and which was in its declining years), it was proposed by S. D. Ingham, that an emblematic device should be published, the hint for which he had observed in some late engraving. The prominent idea in the proposed design was "Science Shedding Her Rays on a Field," in which a variety of agricultural operations were displayed. All that I remember of the reception of this thought, was one or two trifling witticisms, to which it gave birth—one of which was a substitute in the form and manner of the "Sun darting his rays on a potato patch." But, on the whole, the proposition first offered, met with general favor.

"One of the officers of the Society, on returning home, mentioned the suggestion to his daughter, who possessed considerable talent for drawing in water colors; and long before the next annual meeting of the Society, she had completed an original design intended to characterize and properly designate the organization. The general outline of the picture comprised a delineation of a farm located on the margin of a river. Within a short

¹⁰Apparently the fair of 1811 had been forgotten by Agricola when he wrote this account 57 years later. It was the original intention of the Society to offer premiums as soon as the condition of the treasury permitted. In fact, section 14 of the constitution declared: "The Secretary shall as soon as necessary funds are provided annually propose prizes upon Interesting subjects, relative to actual experiments and improvements in agriculture & manufactures, & for the best essays written on proposed subjects. The Society will from time to time publish extracts from such communications as shall be made to them. To promote these views, all experienced agriculturalists and manufacturers are invited to assist the Society with their information. The Society will publish from time to time the prize subject, and the manner in which the claims shall be examined and determined." As far as we know, the last named provision was never carried out.

¹¹Part of section 10 of the constitution provided, "Strangers who desire to be present as auditors may be introduced by a resident member."

distance could be seen a flock of sheep grazing—near which, upon a grassy hillock, was seated a shepherd, with a dog by his side, and the emblematic crook in his hand. In the distance could be discerned a loaded wain, slowly wending its way to the farm-buildings, which, with the farm residence and other appurtenances, were all appropriately represented. This was duly exhibited to the Society at its next annual meeting, and a handsome note of thanks was tendered to the lady (including both the design and the execution of the piece), as, at that early day there was neither premium nor competition.

"Under the painting was inscribed the motto from Thomson's Seasons with the alteration of a single word, and this introduced without altering the measure. The inscription reads, 'Hence Columbia sees her solid grandeur rise.'

"This painting is still preserved in the family, although the executor of it has been deceased some twelve or fourteen years.¹²

Newtown, Sept. 24th.

AGRICOLA."

* * *

We have thus reviewed all the known data in connection with our county's first agricultural society. Its history has been presented as full as possible, — in the light of all known facts, — because it was one of our pioneer organizations. We are not as fortunate, however, in having such complete records pertaining to the second society, which was founded at Newtown in 1820.

¹²The artist referred to was Miss Elizabeth Johnson, born in 1790, who married in 1814, Jonathan Pickering, of Solebury. Her sister, Ann (Johnson) Paxson, was the one who "still preserved [the painting] in the family" after Eliza's death. Following the death of Mrs. Paxson, the painting probably descended to the late Judge Edward M. Paxson or the late Col. Henry D. Paxson. Eliza and Ann were, of course, the two daughters of Samuel Johnson, the first and only president of the Bucks County Society for Promoting Agriculture. The *Bucks County Intelligencer* of February 23, 1869, contains a shorter article from Buckingham very similar to Agricola's. It was probably written by Thomas Paxson, the husband of Ann, who signed it simply "T. P." His article, after more or less repeating the information in Agricola's communication, continued: "Eliza Johnson, daughter of the President, had a decided talent for drawing and undertook the task. The design and execution of the work would have done credit to a much more experienced artist. The prominent features in the drawing (which is in the possession of her only sister), are a farm on the margin of a river, with its buildings and ornamental shade trees, a load of grain in the distance, a plowman with his oxen, the boy with a team to the harrow, the cattle grazing, a shepherd's cottage, a flock of sheep and the shepherd with his dog and crook. The drawing was introduced to the society as a present from the hand of the self-taught young artist. It elicited a hearty and united response with a glad vote of thanks. The society awarded no premiums, neither had they a race course for fast horses, as a school to promote in the minds of their children a tendency to extravagance and immorality." Note the similarity between this drawing and the "diploma" depicted on a later page which was engraved by William H. Ellis for the Bucks County Agricultural Society, in the year 1846.

Unless additional information is uncovered in the future only an incomplete and sketchy history can be written. As far as we know, there is not a single contemporaneous document pertaining in any way to the history of the Agricultural Society of Bucks County, except the advertisements and the occasional reports of meetings that are found in the Doylestown newspapers.¹³ It has been stated that the minutes of the Society were lost, "having probably been burned with the house of John Linton, two miles from Newtown, on the Yardleyville road, in the spring of 1852."¹⁴ We see no reason why, (in the absence of positive proof to the contrary), that John Linton should have had the minutes in his house twenty years after the affairs of the Society had been closed.

A careful study of the newspaper advertisements of the various meetings, — which were always over the signature of the secretary, — revealed that former sheriff Thomas G. Kennedy, of Newtown, was the organizing secretary, that he held office through the meeting of February 12, 1821, and that sometime thereafter he resigned. The call for the meeting of October 29, 1821 was issued by Stephen Burson, M. D., as secretary pro tem., and declared, "in addition to the ordinary business of the Society, a secretary

¹³This statement should be slightly qualified, because two of the four extant annual addresses appeared exclusively in sources other than the county papers. The address of 1823 by Mr. James P. Morris was printed in pamphlet form, of which the only known copy is at Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The address of 1825 by Dr. Phineas Jenks, and the address of 1826 by Mr. James Cox both appeared in the *Bucks County Patriot*. The address of 1827 by Samuel D. Ingham, Esq., was printed in Samuel Hazard's *Register of Pennsylvania*, Vol. II, p. 118.

¹⁴Quotation is from an article appearing in *Newtown Enterprise*, September 15, 1923, by Mrs. Laura (Feaster) Gill, who compiled, for the Newtown New Century Club, the first histories of the second and third agricultural societies of Bucks county. We find the following account of the Linton fire in the *Bucks County Intelligencer* of May 25, 1852: "On the morning of the 23d inst., about twenty minutes before three o'clock, the dwelling of John Linton, on the Yardleyville road, near two miles east of Newtown, was discovered to be on fire. The family were aroused and made their escape, and succeeded in getting out the goods from the first story and the cellar; those in the upper stories being consumed with the house. The fire was seen by Joseph Cunningham, a neighbor, who repaired to the spot and assisted in removing the goods. There was an insurance in the Mutual Beneficial Insurance Association of Bucks County, on the house, for about \$1,000; the loss was probably not over \$1,500. It is supposed to have been the work of incendiaries, as the fire originated in a part of the house where no fire has been used for more than a year; and the thunder storm had not yet come up. We saw the light [from Doylestown] plainly at half past three o'clock in the morning, when the fire was probably about its height."

will be elected for the remaining part of the year." John Wanshear Wynkoop, grandson of both Judge Henry Wynkoop and General Francis Murray, was the secretary chosen to fill the vacancy created by Kennedy's resignation. Major Wynkoop held the office for four years. The John Linton above referred to was secretary in 1826 and 1827, and possibly in 1828. Michael Hutchinson Jenks was secretary in 1829, and perhaps longer. However, the call for the adjourned meeting of September 3, 1832 was issued by Dr. John H. Gordon, secretary. We do not, therefore, see why Mr. Linton who was the third from the last secretary should have received the minutes at the death of the Society.

The preliminary meeting to form the Agricultural Society of Bucks County was held at what is now called the Brick Hotel, Newtown, on January 20, 1820. The names of the men who formed the second society of its kind in Bucks county remain today unknown, for all the minute books, treasurer's accounts, and other papers belonging to the company have been lost or destroyed. The call for the meeting in the *Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser* was unsigned, and simply stated, "Persons desirous of forming an Agricultural Society, are requested to meet at Mrs. Hinkle's Tavern, in Newtown, on Thursday the 20th inst. at one o'clock, P. M." Apparently a constitution was adopted at this meeting, for at the next meeting, held February 12, 1821 "Agreeably to their Constitution," it was announced that "considerable alterations and amendments to the Constitution will be proposed."¹⁵ The members convened at the old Court House,¹⁶

¹⁵*Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser*, January 23, 1821. At a stated meeting of the society to be held Monday, April 30, 1821, 1:00 P. M., it was advertised that there would be operated for exhibition purposes, "A machine for breaking Flax, which has been tried and found to perform the work better, and with less waste, than the common Break, and on which upwards of 300 weight of Flax, may be broken in one day." At the same meeting a year later, (April 29, 1822), it was announced that another machine, manufactured by Chapman & Rawley, for breaking and dressing flax would be exhibited.

¹⁶The exact date when the old Court House was torn down is not known with certainty. The vendue of the county buildings was advertised in the *Bucks County Patriot and Farmers' Advertiser* of October 31, 1825; but the last sheriff's proclamation mentioning the election polls being at the "House formerly occupied as a Court House" was in 1829. We believe, therefore, that the demolition probably took place in the winter of 1829-1830. General Davis obviously erred in his date when he wrote, (*History of Bucks County*, Vol. II, p. 353, note), "The court-house was purchased by James Phillips, who attempted to dig a cellar under it, but the walls began to give way, and soon after 1827 it was taken down." Thaddeus Stevens Kenderdine implies

where their other meetings were held until 1826, at which time the meeting place returned to the Brick Hotel.

The annual meeting for the election of officers of the Society was held at first on the last Monday of January. But beginning in 1825, the time of this meeting seems to have been changed to May. Probably the spring was a more convenient time for the majority of members to assemble together than midwinter was. The announcement for the special election to be held on May 28, 1829, "earnestly requested that the members generally attend, as business of the utmost importance to the society will be presented for its consideration."¹⁷ Davis said, "At the May meeting, 1829, Dr. Jenks introduced a strong temperance resolution, which was adopted. The minutes are silent as to what was said on the subject, but, instead of preparing for the November exhibition at the next meeting, the society was adjourned until September, 1832." Mrs. Gill wrote that the following officers were elected in 1829, "Aaron Feaster, president; John Linton, vice president; Dr. John H. Gordon, secretary; Chapman Buckman, treasurer; Michael H. Jenks, orator; and Dr. P. Jenks, librarian. At the next meeting Dr. Jenks presented a strong temperance resolution. In 1829 the society met in pursuance of adjournment, and discussed a proposition for a temporary suspension of the meeting."

The activities of the Agricultural Society of Bucks County most interesting to us now are undoubtedly the annual exhibitions or cattle shows held in the yard of the Brick Hotel in the fall of the year, generally on the second Monday in November. However, the first show, a one-man affair and only a forerunner of what was to follow, was held February 12, 1821 in connection with the annual meeting. At this time Charles Brown showed one cow and one bull. An extract from the minutes printed in the *Pennsylvania Correspondent*¹⁸ contains this report by Enos

in his pamphlet *When Newtown was the County Seat*, illus. facing p. 57, that the Court House was pulled down before 1822.

¹⁷*Bucks County Intelligencer and General Advertiser*, May 25, 1829.

¹⁸Issue of February 20, 1821. Several technical papers were presented before the Society in the year 1821. The *Correspondent* of May 8, 1821 contains a letter from John Linton to Secretary Thomas G. Kennedy about an invention of Lambert Torbert's, — "a very respectable neighbor" of Linton, — to prevent the ravages of the Hessian fly. James Worth, Esq., of Sharon, Middletown township, read two papers before the Society on July 30th of that year. They were so successfully received that he repeated them before the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture, on the

Morris, Esq., Dr. Phineas Jenks, and Thomas Yardley, "appointed a committee to view the Cattle exhibited":

"That they gave the preference to the cattle brought by Charles Brown of Poplar Grove in this County, viz.

"A Cow of more than ordinary size, of the milk breed, in fine order, and which if fattened would probably weigh 1000 lbs. She is in the opinion of your committee, more perfect in symmetry and beauty than any animal of the kind they have ever seen.

"Also a Bull of the Holland breed four years old, remarkably well fatted. He is long, low, and heavy, of apparent perfection in all his parts, except the horns, which are short and quite loose, he measures 4 feet 3 inches high, 7 feet 3 inches long, 7 feet 3 inches round the girth, 2 feet 7 inches diameter through the shoulder.

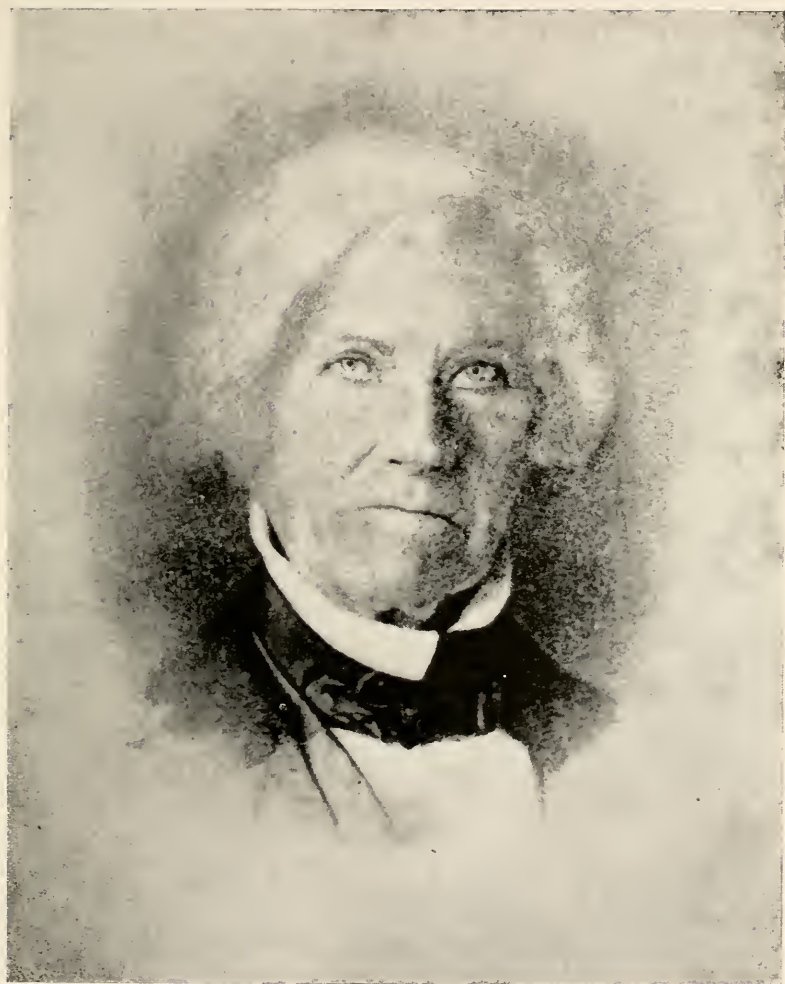
"Your committee have no hesitation in saying that they consider him far superior to any of the celebrated Bakewell breed that have come under their notice, and that Mr. Brown is entitled to the thanks of this society for his care in selecting and fattening cattle."

At a stated meeting held April 28, 1823, "a newly invented cleaning Mill" was exhibited to the Society. It was not, then, until the last Monday in October, 1823, that the first of six regular annual exhibitions was instituted. Unfortunately, no report of the first one of these is known to exist.

The announcement for the second exhibition declared, "It is proposed to have a ploughing match on the same day — a suitable piece of ground will be provided to test the qualities of the different kinds of ploughs. The neighboring farmers who have any of superior construction, are invited to come forward and join in the honorable competition. Any person having new and improved implements of husbandry; fine stock, or any superior productions of the earth, will confer a favor on the Society, by exhibiting them at the meeting."¹⁹ Fortunately, the complete report of the exhibition was extracted from the minutes and published by order

following October 23d. The first was on the pea fly, (*Bruchus pisi*), and the second was on the diseases of the Morello cherry and the management of fruit trees. These scientific papers were printed first in the *Saturday Magazine*, and then reprinted in the local *Pennsylvania Correspondent*, issues of February 12 and April 16, 1822. The first paper is addressed to "John Linton, Esq., Chairman of the Committee on Entomology." The second paper is addressed to "Mr. James P. Morris, Chairman of the Committee on Fruit and Forest Trees."

¹⁹*Bucks County Patriot and Farmers' Advertiser*, October 25, 1824. This was the first of at least five consecutive exhibitions to be held on the second Monday of November. The shows were officially opened at 10:00 o'clock in the morning.



PHINEAS JENKS, M.D.

Born May 3, 1781 — Died August 6, 1851

FOUNDER OF BUCKS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

"In his brain," wrote Chief Justice Edward M. Paxson, "the idea of organizing this Society first found a lodgement."

of the Society in the *Bucks County Patriot and Farmers' Advertiser* of November 22, 1824, by John W. Wynkoop, secretary. It follows in full:

"The committee on Stock, &c. report—

"That among the horses exhibited which were worthy of distinction, were Wm. Aspy's, three years old colt Standard, Sired by Badgers Sir Solomon, and bred by Mr. Stephen Hunt, of New Jersey—he bids fair to rank among the first rate thorough bred stud horses.

"Mr. Steele's Diomedé Virginia Mare, half sister to Henry the late competitor of Eclipse; she is a mare of superior form.

"Mr. McDowell's draft stud horse, grandson of Tate's imported Cornplanter, bred by Mr. David Jones from his blooded mare, he is a horse of power and great action for his size.

"Cattle—Mr. James Cox exhibited his imported Cow. She was pronounced by the multitude attending to be the handsomest Cow they had ever seen, and your committee are of opinion that her points and general figure are equal to any of the Teeswater or Durham short horn cattle that have been imported—bred and exhibited by John Hare Powell, the most celebrated breeder in Pennsylvania.

"Also, his high bred bull calf Blythe. His sire, Powell's Champion, by Palm flower, and Palm flower by Patriot, who sold for 500 guineas. Blythe's dam was Powell's Shepherdess. He is a calf of fine promise. Your committee anticipate great and lasting advantages to result from his progeny and recommend the thanks of the society to be voted to Mr. Cox for his liberal exertions to improve our breed of cattle.

"Mr. James Worth, in addition to his Alderly Cow, Sharon cow, native short honed beauty, and his large Sharon steer, that bids fair to be the largest ever bred in the country, also exhibited his three year old bull, bred by Nicholas Biddle, esq. from the thorough bred imported bull Denton; his dam the celebrated Southborough cow, which produced within one year 480½ lbs. of butter. (She is better known by the name of the Oakes cow, that made 16 lbs. of butter per week, yielding 36 quarts of milk per day.) Your committee are happy in beholding in this noble animal points equal to any of the imported Durham short horned cattle—that they have seen few men do as much credit to their surname as James.

"Dr. A. T. Moore's cow and yearling heifer are very fine cattle—we hope to see them crossed with the improved breed.

"Enos Morris' Bullocks were well selected cattle, and do credit to their feeder.

"Hogs.—Mr. Francis Mahan's barrows were the best fed hogs on the ground, in addition to which they are well framed, and your committee are satisfied that their feeder is not without a Hobby.

"Mr. John Linton's Boar is a well grown and well formed hog—he took the attention of the people, and we anticipate that there will be many of his progeny in the neighborhood the ensuing season. His brood sow

had nothing worthy of distinction. The pedigree of his stock was not furnished.

"Mr. Aaron Feaster exhibited a pig eight weeks old, of the Thorp breed, crossed with Maris's importation; it is even very fine, and your committee are of opinion the cross will produce a fine race of hogs. We are sorry we did not take its weight.

"Major John W. Wynkoop exhibited two sucking pigs, 78 days old—their dam a half blood of Haines' imported No-ball, and the sire a half blood of Cobbets importation crossed with good native hogs on both sides. They are fine formed pigs—the sow pig weighed $91\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. the boar $36\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. They are from a small stock on both sides, but very healthy, and will always do credit to the feeder.

"Mr. James Worth's Cobbet hogs—Although he has taken pains to introduce the breed, which is approved of by a majority of those who do not feed high; yet, from the appearance of his stock, your committee infer that a hog is not his hobby.

"Sheep—Mr. Chapman Buckman's quarter blooded merinos were the best of the kind we have seen.

"Mr. John Leffert's Bakewell sheep, originally from Capt. Farmer's flock of the Bean's importation; some of them are equal to Capt. Barney's, of Delaware. Mr. Lefferts is the only gentleman of the county who has taken care to preserve the Bakewell sheep pure in blood. They certainly are the most desirable breed to the farmers of our country. His flock is an evidence that farmers may breed in and in with safety and advantage.—He has lately however, procured a fine buck of the same breed from the neighborhood of New Brunswick; your committee are not without a hope that this race of fine animals will yet become more common, and that Mr. Lefferts may be remunerated for his attention is preserving his flock so high in the blood.

"Vegetables were produced in great variety. Those the most worthy of distinction were Mr. Thomas Cunningham's mercer potatoes; three of which were exhibited in a half peck, and they being clustered filled it, making good huckster's measure. Your committee are of opinion they can be cultivated to greater advantage to the farmer than any other potatoe now in use, as they are generally approved of for the table.

"James Worth's Mangel Wurtzel. One that was exhibited weighed 13 lb. 10 oz. without the top. They are known frequently to grow much larger. The experiment which Mr. Worth has made the present season in raising this vegetable, convinces your committee of the great value of the crop. The tops were not taken into the calculation, as they were cut off close before weighing.

"The last, not least, was a straw hat, exhibited by Miss Keyser, of Newtown, plaited by herself. It is superior in appearance to many of the Leghorn hats of No. 17. Your committee would recommend to the members of the society the cultivation of the Leghorn straw, in order to give

the American ladies an opportunity of displaying their skill in this branch of useful industry.

"The Committee appointed to superintend the ploughing report, that Enos Morris's plough drawn by two horses, William Austin, ploughman, ploughed 3/16 of an acre of herd and timothy sward 7 inches deep in 24 minutes.—James Worth and John Linton's ploughs, each drawn by two horses, with Cornelius Torbert and Daniel Brass ploughmen, ploughed the same quantity in 27 minutes 6 inches deep; and that John Lefferts plough, drawn by three horses, himself ploughman, ploughed the same quantity in 40 minutes 7 inches deep—all of which was done in a superior and handsome manner.

"The Committee on implements of husbandry report, that there has been submitted to them by Mr. Worth, a Corn Shelling Machine, (Moore's patent) which, from the simplicity of its construction, cheapness, and complete operation, they believe is well entitled to the attention of farmers generally. They also examined an ox cart belonging to Mr. David Jones, which contained an improvement in the method of discharging its load, which they consider an important one."

At the annual meeting and election held May 16, 1825, "The imported Bull, Bishop, with some of his progeny" was shown to the members, but it was not until November 14th that the big annual exhibition and cattle show was held. "There will also be a ploughing match with horses and oxen, when the farmers of the county are cordially invited to come forward and test the qualities of their ploughs, horses, and oxen and their own skill as ploughmen."²⁰

The exhibition of 1826, was also apparently a success. Fifty dollars in prize money was awarded, and according to General Davis, "Jeremiah Bailey exhibited a model of his machine for mowing grass and grain, which had been in successful operation, in Philadelphia county, and was well indorsed by Edward Duffield and Samuel Newbold. James Worth, Newtown, had also used it the last season, and said it did better work than anything he had ever seen."²¹ The report of this exhibition, like the one of 1825, has not been preserved. only the premium list has survived. It is quoted below from the *Bucks County Patriot* of September 4, 1826.

²⁰*Bucks County Patriot and Farmers' Advertiser*, October 31, 1825.

²¹Davis, W. W. H., *History of Bucks County*, Vol. II, p. 353. See also T. S. Kenderdine's article, "An Old Mowing Machine", in *Proceedings of Bucks County Historical Society*, Vol. III, p. 373.

BUCKS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION.

"The inhabitants of Bucks County are respectfully informed, that a show or exhibition of cattle, sheep and other animals, domestic manufactures &c. will be held at the house of Mrs. Ann Hinkle, in the village of Newtown, on Monday, the 13th of November, [1826] when the following premiums will be offered, for the annexed articles, viz.

CATTLE.

For the best Bull above two years old	\$5
For the best Bull under 2 years	3
For the best Cow above three years	4
For the best Heifer between 1 and 3	3
For the best Heifer calf under 1 year	2
	—17

SHEEP.

For the best Merino Ram	3
Ewes not less than 3 in number	2
Dishley Ram	3
Ewes 3 in number	2
	—10

SWINE.

For the best Boar	3
For the best Sow	2
	— 5

WINE.

Best domestic	3
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CIDER.

Best	3
	— 6

CHEESE.

Best	3
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BUTTER.

Best not less than three months old.....	2
	— 5

At the same time and place, there will be a ploughing match—Premiums as follow—

PLOUGHING.

Best, one eighth of an acre, performed within 35 minutes	2
Five next best 1 dollar each	5
	— 7
	—
Total.....	\$50

"Premiums to be confined to inhabitants of the county of Bucks. No person will be entitled to a Premium for any animal which he shall not have bred or possessed at least three months preceding the exhibition; and he must give satisfactory assurance of its remaining in the county for twelve months thereafter, provided it is of sufficient age to breed from. Nor for domestic articles unless manufactured at his or her residence, and the process in manufacturing stated.

"The society reserves the right of withholding premiums in every case, when the object presented is deemed unworthy of distinction.

"The society regrets that the limited state of the funds has necessarily confined the premiums to the objects enumerated, and particularly that they have been compelled to exclude Horses, Household Fabrics, the produce of the soil, implements of Husbandry, and other useful inventions. But it is hoped that the proprietors of those important articles will bring them forward; because it will not only benefit the community at large, to which every member of the human family is bound to contribute his part, but it will really comport with their own interest; for instance, what is known of the value of a horse by the pompous advertisements which appear when the meanest is often extolled beyond the most excellent, and therefore the owners of fine horses, would establish their true merits more readily at a public exhibition, than by all that could be said of them on paper: and the same observations may be applied to household fabrics, implements of husbandry &c.

JAMES WORTH,
Chairman of the Committee.

"Such animals as are intended for competition on the premium list, must be on the ground by nine o'clock A. M. By order of the Society,
JOHN LINTON, *Secretary.*"

The exhibition of 1827 was much more successful than the preceding ones. The following is a complete report of the show:²²

BUCKS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION.

"At the Exhibition Meeting of the Agricultural Society of Bucks County, held at the house of Mrs. Ann Hinkle, in Newtown, November 12, 1827.

"The Committees, on Stock—on Implements of Husbandry—on Household Fabrics, and on Ploughing, made the following Reports, to wit:

ON STOCK.

"We the Committee on Stock make the following Report:

"Mr. Miles Addis's Young Expedition, a Stallion 4 years old is, in the opinion of your Committee, a horse possessing many good points, with a handsome figure and action, and is entitled, we consider to the premium. [\$3.00]

"Mr. James Worth's Brood Mare with a Colt by her side, we consider a fine beast, and entitled to the Premium. [\$2.00]

"Mr. S. Y. Thornton's 2 years old blood Colt, sired by Rattler, is, we consider entitled to notice, although there is no premium for Colts of his age.

²²From the *Bucks County Intelligencer and General Advertiser* of November 19, 1827. The premium money, inserted in brackets by the present writer, was taken from the premium list as published in the same paper on the preceding October 8th.

"Defiance, owned by Messrs. Worth & Feaster, a full blooded Durham short horn Bull, over 2 years old (well known in the neighborhood,) is entitled to the premium. [\$2.00]

"Mr. James Coxe's yearling, full-blooded Durham short horn bull, sired by Blythe, is a beautiful Calf, and promises fair to compete with any of his predecessors. He is therefore entitled to the Premium. [\$1.00] Mr. Coxe's full-blooded, yearling Heifer Fanny, by Blythe, is a very superior Calf, in some parts preferable to her brother. Entitled to the Premium. [\$1.00]

"Mr. Aaron Feaster's half-blooded short horn heifer Calf Tibbs, under 2 years old, is decidedly, in our opinion, entitled to the Premium. [\$8.00] We also award to Mr. Feaster the premium for the second best half-blooded Heifer Calf, under two years old. [\$1.00]

"To Mr. John Linton we award the premium for the best half-blooded Bull under one year old. [No premium listed]

"Mr. James Worth is entitled to the premium for his full-blooded Dishley Ram. [\$2.00] But your committee had much difficulty in deciding with respect to the full-blooded Dishley Ewes, exhibited by Mr. Worth and Mr. Lefferts—as they certainly were very superior; but finally concluded that three of Mr. Worth's Ewes were rather preferable and therefore awarded in his favor. [\$2.00]

Signed,

JOHN KIRKBRIDE,
JOHN LEFFERTS,
M. H. JENKS.

ON IMPLEMENTS OF HUSBANDRY AND HOUSEHOLD FABRICS.

"The Committee on Implements of Husbandry and Household Fabrics, respectfully report: That they have examined the several articles offered for their inspection, and recommend the following premiums, viz:

FOR IMPLEMENTS OF HUSBANDRY.

To John Deates for his Plough manufactured by Garret Brown..... \$2.00
To Wm. Bache for his self-sharpening Plough manufactured by
James Philips 1.00
To Wm. Bache for his self-sharpening Cultivator..... 1.00
To Croasdale & Kirk, for a Sausage Cutter 1.00

"Buckman & Fasset, exhibited a Washing Machine, which, from the high character given to it by a very respectable member of the society, the committee recommend it to the notice of the public.

"The Committee further recommend the following premiums on Household Fabrics.

To Mrs. Alice M'Nair for her Carpet..... \$2.00
To Mrs. Ann Morris, for her Carpet..... 1.00
To Michael H. Jenks for his excellent Pomona Brandy..... 1.00

JAMES WORTH,
Chairman of Committee.

ON PLOUGHING.

"The Committee on Ploughing report.—That two different Ploughs only were exhibited, viz: Bache's and Brown & Deates. It is the opinion of the Committee that Bache's Plough will remove more earth, with the same strength, (of Horses) than any Plough in the County. At the same time they think that Brown & Deates's Plough is worthy the attention of the public, and performed the work in a much handsomer manner, managed by Joseph Buckman, with his own horses. Isaac Vanhorn with Mr. Morris's horses and Bache's plough, certainly deserves great credit. The Committee award to Mr. Buckman the first premium. [\$5.00]

Signed,

JOHN LEFFERTS,
M. H. JENKS,
WM. R. RICHARDSON.

"Extracted from the Minutes,

JOHN LINTON, Sec'y."

General Davis may have seen at one time the original minutes of the Society, for he said, "At the exhibition November 10, 1828, premiums were offered on horses, cattle, sheep, hogs, miscellaneous articles and plowing. Some of the fine stock of John Hare Powell was brought to this last exhibition. Among other leading men, who encouraged the pioneer society, were Dr. John H. Gordon, Thomas G. Kennedy, Michael H. Jenks and James Worth."²³ Mrs. Gill wrote:

"In 1828 the society met at the house of Joseph Archambault (Brick Hotel). The exhibition made a good display; it was Archambault's first year at the Brick, and the dinner prepared for the members was a credit to the new landlord. The Pomona brandy, manufactured by Michael H. Jenks was placed on the table free and plenty, and appears to have acted like a charm. The brandy and the maker were warmly toasted. When the age of the brandy was given it was tasted again, and the more it was tasted, the older and better it became, while regret was expressed that a larger premium could not be given.²⁴ It was remarked afterward that several of the members knew more about good brandy than they did about good ploughing."²⁵

²³Davis, W. W. H., *History of Bucks County*, Vol. II, p. 353. A complete report of this meeting is to be found in the *Bucks County Intelligencer and General Advertiser* of December 1, 1828, and the *Political Examiner and Bucks County Advertiser* of December 8, 1828, but no mention, however, is made therein of "the fine stock of John Hare Powell."

²⁴Newtown's *Star of Freedom*, June 18, 1817, carried this brief advertisement by Michael H. Jenks: "Apple Whiskey, Of the first quality, for Sale, By the Hogshhead or Barrel." Note that he received from the Society in 1827 a premium of \$1.00 for "his excellent Pomona Brandy", so he apparently ran his distillery for many years. This in spite of the fact that the bye-laws of 1821 provided for a standing committee "especially to discourage that great bane of society, the excessive use of spirituous liquors."

²⁵*Newtown Enterprise*, September 15, 1923.

Two of the most prominent members of the Agricultural Society of Bucks County were James Worth, Esq., a distinguished gentleman whose country seat was Sharon, in Middletown township; and Dr. Phineas Jenks, who lived in the old stone house at the southwest corner of State Street and Centre Avenue, in Newtown. Both of these men were received into the honorary membership of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture,—

BUCKS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

NOTICE is hereby given that the society will be dissolved on Thursday, the 4th of October next, when an equitable dividend of the moneys in the hands of the Treasurer and those which may arise from the sale of the books, &c. will be made among the members, in attendance or their representatives. The money not claimed on that day will be appropriated to some benevolent purpose. By order of the Society.

J. H. GORDON, Sec'y.

September 24th, 1832

N. B. The Books, &c. will be publicly sold at 2 o'clock P. M. on the day of meeting, at the house of Joseph Archambault, in Newtown. Members, who hold books belonging to the Society, will please to return them on or before the day of sale.

LAST NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT OF THE SOCIETY.

the former on February 15, 1820 and the latter on March 21, 1838. Why such men of recognized ability permitted their society, formed under the most favorable circumstances, to fall to pieces remains a mystery. In speaking of the wind-up of this organization Mrs. Gill published the following conclusions:

"A meeting was called in 1832, committees appointed to collect the books and adjust the affairs of the society, in order to close up the business.

At a later meeting the same year, the books were sold, and it was ordered that the proceeds be divided among the members, with the understanding that if any shares were not called for within ten days, all money then remaining in the hands of the committee was to be presented to the cause of temperance. The projectors of the society had a higher object in view than money for what they exhibited. The institution was, in fact, controlled by a high class of men.

"Charles B. Trego, of Philadelphia, who was spending the summer of 1874 at the home of his brother, Edward, remarked on hearing the names of members of the society; 'I remember many of them very well, and also the places at which they lived.' He was asked whether they were all farmers. 'Oh! no,' he answered: 'They were all men of solid worth and intelligence and in nearly every department of business, — farmers, mechanics, retired gentlemen, lawyers, and doctors.' He then told of the farms and places in which they lived. He was asked: 'How would they compare with the persons who now, after fifty years, occupy the same places?' The question was too direct to answer in one word, but the substance of it was that the tone and character had not been elevated, and if the present generation had not better facilities for business than they had fifty years ago, they would loose by comparison. It was remarkable that the society which had appeared to be in such successful operation in 1829 when officers were re-elected for the ensuing year, with the most favorable prospects for a good exhibition in the fall, should break down and crumble to pieces in the course of a few months. There were some causes for the change and it is interesting to know what they were. Among the changes might be noted: first, the old court house, in which the meetings had been held, was sold;²⁶ second, there had been some jealousy created in the society by rival exhibitors.

"James Worth, Aaron Feaster, and Jonathan Wynkoop were the fathers of the society, and had their farms better stocked than any others, with all improved breeds of animals, until James Cox, of Philadelphia, moved up to Northampton, and turned his attention to stock raising. He had good taste and ample means for making a fine display of the best kind of cattle. Public attention was originally all directed to what Worth, Feaster, and Wynkoop said. James Cox was likely to become the coming man.

"Temperance was beginning to be an exciting element in social life and a strong disposition was manifested to make the Agricultural Society of Bucks County do its share of temperance work. This soon made a bad feeling in the society and had probably more influence in breaking up the

²⁶This had nothing to do with the downfall of the Society. (E. R. B.) Some of the known members of the Agricultural Society of Bucks County include: Dr. Stephen Burson, William Carr, James Cox, John Cox, Aaron Feaster, Dr. John H. Gordon, Michael H. Jenks, Esq., Dr. Phineas Jenks, Thomas G. Kennedy, Esq., John Kirkbride, John Lefferts, John Linton, Esq., Yardley Linton, Enos Morris, Esq., James P. Morris, William R. Richardson, James Worth, Esq., Major John Wanshear Wynkoop, Jonathan Wynkoop, Esq., and Thomas Yardley.

organization than any other one cause. This can be appreciated by a little consideration of social life at that time. In that day it would have been regarded as cool treatment to visitors not to offer them a glass of wine. Mechanics who came at sunshine ready for work expected their bitters before breakfast, dinner and supper and it was the same with laborers. Rum was indispensable in the harvest field to brace up the exhausted systems of the workmen. The theory that rum has more tendency to prostrate the system, than to give it strength, had not been accepted. As this was the attitude of social life and public sentiment, there is little wonder that the strong resolutions offered at the meeting of 1829, condemning the use of liquor made a great sensation. The neighborhood was not prepared for it when it was only at the last exhibition that the Pomona brandy of Michael H. Jenks was very acceptable and highly praised at the dinner at the Brick hotel of Joseph Archambault."

* * *

CONSTITUTION

of the

Agricultural Society of Bucks County.

Amended and Adopted, February 12, 1821, and
first Printed in the "Pennsylvania Correspondent
and Farmers' Advertiser" on the April 3d following.

Article I.

The Society shall be styled the "Agricultural Society of Bucks County"—and shall consist of such persons as reside within the County, and shall comply with the provisions of this Constitution.

Article II.

The attention of the Society shall be called to Agriculture, and all subjects connected therewith.

Article III.

The stated meetings of the Society shall be held on the last second-days, or Mondays of January, April, July and October, at such hour and place as the Bye-laws may designate, and five members shall constitute a quorum for ordinary transactions.

Article IV.

The officers of the Society shall at present, consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, to be annually elected at the stated meeting in January:—but should an election not be so held, it may take place at any after stated meeting; and any vacancy by death, resignation or otherwise, may be supplied at any time, provided that such vacancy shall have been announced at some previous meeting. The number of Vice-Presidents may hereafter be increased and such other officers appointed, as may be found expedient. In all cases,

the officers chosen shall continue to exercise their functions, until others are elected.

Article V.

It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Society, to preserve order, to state questions, to give the casting vote when the Society is equally divided, and to perform all such other acts as may appertain to his office. In the absence of the President, his duties shall devolve on the Vice-President.

Article VI.

The Secretary shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Society, and perform such other acts as the Bye-laws may enjoin, or the transactions of the Society require.

Article VII.

The Treasurer shall give bond with approved security, for the faithful performance of his duties; he shall receive and pay all monies belonging to the Society, and keep a regular account thereof, and exhibit the same at the stated meeting in January annually, and at such other times as may be called for; but he is to pay no monies except on the order of the President, attested by the Secretary.

Article VIII.

In the absence of any officer at any stated meeting, his place may be supplied pro tempore, by a vote of the Society.

Article IX.

There shall be held annually at the stated meeting in October, a shew or exhibition of Cattle, Sheep and other animals, domestic manufacturers, implements of husbandry, new and improved varieties of fruit, grains, grasses, roots, and other productions.

Article X.

Every member shall sign the Constitution, and pay at the time one dollar, and on the first day of January annually thereafter, such further sum as may be required by the Bye-laws. Any member whose contributions shall be found to be two years in arrears, and shall omit to pay the same on application by Treasurer, or other person authorized by him, shall be considered as withdrawing from the Society, and shall forfeit all interests therein.

Article XI.

Amendments to this Constitution, may be made at the annual meeting in January by two-thirds of the members present.

BYE-LAWS OR RULES

For the government of the Agricultural Society of Bucks County.

1st. All meetings of the society shall be held at the Old Court-House, in Newtown, at one o'clock, P. M., except such as may be otherwise directed at a preceding meeting; and business shall be entered

upon within one hour after the time appointed, provided a quorum shall have assembled.

2d. At the annual meeting in January, the following standing Committees shall be appointed, viz:—

1. On Farm, Buildings, Fences and Implements of Husbandry.—To study the improvement of Houses, Barns, Barnyards and Out-buildings, both as it regards the plan and materials. To examine the relative cost of the different kinds of fences, and the best methods of constructing or raising them. To make improvements in the implements of husbandry, and to introduce such as may be made in other places.

2. On Domestic Animals.—To enquire after and introduce the best kinds, to endeavor to ascertain the most economical and best methods of rearing, managing, and feeding them, together with facts on the relative advantages of the employment of horses, mules and oxen, for labor.

3. On the Veterinary Art.—To investigate the nature and origin of the diseases of domestic animals, and the best methods of prevention and cure.

4. On Soils and Manures.—To examine the different soils of this County, and study their improvement. To endeavor to ascertain the relative advantages of barn-yard manure, plaister, lime, burnt clay, ashes, salt, and other kinds of manure, with the most proper time and manner of applying each; together with the best methods of accumulating and preparing them.

5. On Grasses, Grains, and Roots.—To enquire after and recommend the best and most profitable kinds, the time and manner of sowing and planting, and the proper quantity of each per acre; also, the previous preparation of the ground and seed, together with the best method of culture.

6. On Fruit and Forest Trees.—To endeavor to ascertain the best and most useful fruits of all kinds, with the best methods of making wine, cider, &c. To examine the causes of the premature decay of fruit-trees, with a view to their preservation; to ascertain the best time of cutting forest-trees, as it respects the durability of the wood, under ground or exposed to the weather—also, for fuel.

7. On Horticulture.—To ascertain the best and most approved methods of managing kitchen gardens, attend to the introduction of useful vegetables, modes of culture, &c. And also, to promote good taste in the planning and arrangement of gardens generally.

8. On Entomology.—To examine the habits of such insects as injure the crops of the farmer, with a view to discover the means of destroying them, or preventing their ravages; and to study such other branches of natural history, as are interesting to the Agriculturist.

9. On Domestic Manufactures.—To endeavor to devise the best means of encouraging household fabrics, and raising the raw materials

for larger establishments, and generally to recommend a preference in the use of the manufactures of our country.

10. On Industry and Economy.—To endeavor to find means for the employment of the poor, and to stimulate the idle into industry; to introduce habits of economy and good management among the laboring class, and especially to discourage that great bane of society, the excessive use of spirituous liquors.

11. A Library Committee.—To superintend the library, to appoint a librarian, and to establish such rules for its government, as are consistant with the views of the society.

Every member of the society shall have the privilege of attaching himself to any one, or more, of the standing committees, except the library committee; each committee to consist of at least five members, besides the officers of the society, who shall be admitted ex-officio; and where that number do not voluntarily offer, the president shall appoint the deficient part.

Each committee shall transmit to the society, all papers which may be addressed to them, touching the objects of the association. It will be expected that every committee will make a report to the society at least once in every year. It shall be the duty of the first named on each committee, on being furnished with a list of the members, to notify his colleagues of their appointment, and call them together, whenever he may deem it expedient.

3d. It shall be the duty of the president to call special meetings of the society whenever he may deem it expedient, or on the application of any five members made in writing and stating the object of the call. He shall appoint all committees consisting of not more than three members; and he shall designate the first or Chairman of all the standing committees. It shall further be his duty to maintain all useful correspondence, not otherwise particularly directed; and he shall annually request some member to deliver an address at the stated meeting in January.

4th. It shall be the duty of the Secretary to enter the number of members attending each meeting; to notify the Chairman of each committee of the object of their appointment, and furnish a list of the members. He shall publish the meetings of the society unless otherwise directed.

5th. The business of the society shall commence on the president calling the members to order, when all conversation and noise that might interrupt the proceedings, must be avoided. The secretary shall first read the minutes of the preceding meeting, but no debate shall be admitted on such minutes further than to correct inaccuracies. The reports of the standing committees shall next be in order, taking precedence as they stand recorded. Other committees shall then be called upon as they are entered on the minutes, and all unfinished business must be disposed of before any new matter can be introduced; except

at special meetings, when the business for which the meeting is convened must first be transacted.

6th. All motions shall be reduced to writing, if required, by the presiding officer, nor shall any debate take place until a motion is regularly seconded and stated from the chair. A motion may be withdrawn by the member who makes it before amendment or decision, and a motion to amend, commit, postpone or adjourn, shall always be in order.

7th. In all debates the members shall address the president. A member shall not be interrupted while speaking, except by a call to order or for the purpose of explanation, nor shall he speak more than twice on the same subject, without leave obtained from the society. The president shall be judge of all questions of order, but any member declared to be transgressed, may explain himself and appeal from such decision and on being seconded the society shall determine. All matters touching the objects of our association may be fully discussed either orally or written, but personal reflections may be deemed indecorous.

8th. All claims against the society must be presented at some regular meeting thereof, and when adjusted, the president shall draw on the treasurer for the amount. The annual contribution of members shall be fifty cents till otherwise directed.

9th. At the stated meeting in July a committee consisting of five members shall be appointed whose duty shall be to attend the exhibition in October and carefully view and examine all such cattle, sheep or other animals, domestic manufactures, implements of husbandry, new and improved varieties of fruit, grain, grasses, roots and other productions, as may be shewn or exhibited, and having completed their examination, they shall report to the society, a statement of their transactions generally, and shall particularly notice every person who may have distinguished him or herself, by exhibiting the best or most approved article of any kind, and also such as may have offered the next best, which report shall be entered at large upon the minutes, and a certificate signed by the president, and attested by the secretary, shall be issued to each individual so distinguished, bearing honorable testimony of the facts; or such other evidence of the merits of the case be granted, as the society may at any time direct. The president is hereby authorized to supply any vacancy that may happen in the committee.

10th. Any alteration or addition to these rules may be made at the annual meeting in January, or at any other stated meeting, provided notice thereof shall have been given at a previous meeting.

We have now reviewed the history of our county's second agricultural society. The third one was formed in 1843, by several of the men who had been active in the society that had become defunct about a decade earlier. They transposed the name of the old Agricultural Society of Bucks County to form the new Bucks County Agricultural Society, and with this change in name came a change in fortune. For forty years the Bucks County Agriculture Society was without doubt one of the most prominent of any county society in Pennsylvania.

We are most fortunate in having preserved to us a splendid history of this Society during the first quarter century of its life. This history, from the pen of none other than the late Judge Edward M. Paxson, appeared in the *Bucks County Intelligencer* of November 10, 1868. And we quote it herewith to preserve it in a more permanent form, because we could not, at this late date hope to be able to frame the story in the same colorful way that one of the founders could. The following is part of, "An Address Delivered before the Bucks County Agricultural Society, at Newtown, September 23, 1868, by Edward M. Paxson, Esq."

"Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Bucks County Agricultural Society:—On the 9th day of October, 1843, I was sitting in the editorial sanctum of the Newtown Journal, when the door opened and in walked my fellow townsman, Dr. Phineas Jenks. He laid down his hat and cane, and with that solemn air so habitual with him, remarked: "Edward, I have been thinking that we ought to have an Agricultural Society in Bucks county, and I have come to consult you in regard to it." The matter was then and there considered and discussed between us, and the result of our deliberations was that I sat down at my table and wrote a notice in these words:

'Bucks County Agricultural Society.

'The Farmers of Bucks county are requested to meet in the Borough of Newtown on Monday the 6th of November next, for the purpose of forming an Agricultural Society. A general attendance is desirable.

Many Farmers.'

"This notice was published next day, October 10th, in the Newtown Journal, and it was the first step in the formation of this Society.²⁷ From

²⁷In the issue of his *Newtown Journal and Workingmen's Advocate* for October 24, 1843, Mr. Paxson wrote: "By reference to our advertising will be seen a call for a meeting of the Farmers and all others interested in the importance of Agriculture, to meet in this Borough, in the Free Church on Monday, the 6th of November, for the purpose of forming a Society for the promotion of agriculture in this county. We deem it unnecessary to speak to our friends upon the importance of this subject, believing that they are well aware that an institution of this kind can but prove highly beneficial to

which it will be seen that Dr. Jenks and myself were, in a measure, its fathers, and as our old friend, the Doctor, is no longer with us, I may perhaps, without egotism, lay claims to being the surviving parent. I confess I feel myself almost too young a man to have such a strapping progeny; and now after an absence of many years when I survey him in all the pride and strength of his full development, I may well explain in the language of the poet: 'The very mother that him bare would scarce have known her child.'

"On the sixth day of November, A. D. 1843, in pursuance of the notice I have referred to, a few of our farmers assembled at Newtown for the purpose therein indicated, and though they were few in numbers, they were mostly men of weight and influence in the community. Samuel D. Ingham, Joshua Dungan, Jacob Eastburn, James C. and Adrian Cornell were among those who attended the first meeting. After some preliminary discussion, the little band organized by calling Dr. Phineas Jenks to the chair,²⁸ and the appointment of a Secretary [i.e., Edward M. Paxson]. The President submitted a constitution to the meeting, which, after divers amendments, was adopted. The Society was formed, and it adjourned to meet at Pineville Hall, on the first Monday of February following, and the President was invited to deliver an address.

"It will thus be seen that the sixth day of November next is the twenty-fifth anniversary of the formation of this Society—its "silver" anniversary, if I may be allowed to borrow the term for the occasion. I submit to the worthy Managers whether it would be right to allow the day to pass without some mark of recognition, and with this suggestion I leave the subject with those to whom it properly belongs.

"The Pineville meeting met, as was agreed upon, February 5, 1844. It was much larger than the Newtown meeting, yet the number present was quite inconsiderable. Pineville Hall was not near full. Indeed, the business of the Society was transacted in the parlor of the hotel then kept by Samuel Tomlinson. A series of by-laws were adopted, and a committee, consisting of Joshua Dungan, Jacob Eastburn, Josiah B. Smith, James C. Cornell, John K. Trego and William Neely Thompson, were appointed to report the names of suitable persons to serve as permanent officers. The committee after consultation reported as follows:—President, Hon. Samuel D. Ingham; Vice Presidents, Dr. Phineas Jenks, James C. Cornell, John K. Trego and John Blackfan; Secretary, Edward M. Paxson; Treasurer, Jacob East-

our county. Aside from the benefit to be derived, the subject is one which is highly interesting to all, whether engaged in that useful and honorable avocation or not. In Chester, Delaware, and many other counties, societies have been formed, farmers have associated together, and each has had the benefit and advantage of the experience of all: to say nothing about the exhibitions of Cattle and Stock, Farming implements of all kinds, Ploughing matches, Premiums, &c. At the last Ploughing match Bucks County was completely victorious, Mahlon Smith of Plumstead receiving the premium for the best plough, and Jonathan Smith the premium for the best ploughing."

²⁸They actually met on Saturday, the 4th, instead of Monday, the 6th, as advertised. (E. R. B.)

burn. The report of the committee was unanimously adopted, and thus the Society was now fully and permanently organized, and in complete working order.

"At this meeting the Secretary was directed to procure an engraved device, representing some rural occupation, to be engraved and printed as an ornament to the certificates to be granted thereafter to those who should exhibit the best stock, &c., at the annual exhibitions. For in that day of small things no one dreamed of offering large premiums in money, or other valuables, to excite competition. We had a Treasurer, it is true, and it sounded well. We had a treasury, but it required no strong box to guard it. The first few dollars that were thrown therein sounded like falling stones in an empty cavern. But the men who had charge of this enterprise at that time were men of pluck and courage. They put their shoulders to the wheel, and though at first it moved slowly, yet it was not long before the indomitable energy and vim of such men as Samuel D. Ingham, Joshua Dungan and James C. Cornell made it hum.

"Addresses were delivered at the Pineville meeting by Dr. Phineas Jenks, the President thereof, and by Samuel D. Ingham, the newly elected President of the Society.²⁹ They were both carefully prepared and interesting papers, and were published in the newspapers of the county for the following weeks. That of Mr. Ingham was marked by the careful thought and extensive reading for which he was deservedly celebrated, and contained many valuable scientific truths in regard to the nature and composition of soils.

"The Pineville meeting adjourned to meet again in three months, and Joshua Dungan was invited to deliver an address. Indeed for some time I think we had an address at each quarterly meeting. It answered very well and added interest to the proceedings. But four addresses a year was pretty severe drain upon the resources of the Society, so far as home orators were concerned; and this custom came to be honored more in the breach than in the observance.

"The first exhibition was held in Newtown, on the 24th of October, A. D. 1844. I remember the day well. Many of us looked forward to it with anxiety. We felt uncertain as to how the result. There had not been any such exhibition in the county for many years, and it was a new thing to most of our farmers. Besides, it came just on the eve of a Presidential election—the famous Clay campaign of 1844, which many of my hearers will remember as one of the most exciting as well as hotly contested campaigns we have ever passed through. We were in the midst of monster political meetings—very much like those we have now, excepting that 1844 was pre-eminently the campaign of big teams—twenty yoke of oxen, I think, having been harnessed to one team at the great Newtown meeting. This was all very well for politics, but very bad for Agricultural Exhibitions. But we persevered. Dr. Phineas Jenks, Garrett Brown and myself com-

²⁹Printed in pamphlet form at the "Journal" office. Barnsley, E. R., *Presses and Printers of Newtown before 1868*, 2d ed., p. 51.

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THE
BUCKS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
THIS Diploma IS Awarded



To Mr. Andrew Watkins of Newtown, Bucks Co., Pa.
For his fine display of Books, &c., &c., Exhibited at Newtown, Oct. 2^d 1849
Cecilia Brown, Secretary, J. C. Cornell, President

DIPLOMA GRANTED TO ANDREW WATKINS AT THE SIXTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF
BUCKS COUNTY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Mr. Watkins, a shoemaker by trade, later enlisted in Capt. Ayers' cavalry company, 18th Penn'a
Cavalry, and died a prisoner of war at Richmond, Va., on July 20, 1864.

His home in Newtown was at the "Sandwich House" on the main
street, next door to the Sign of the Bird in Hand.

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posed the Committee of Arrangements. Dr. Jenks did not act, and the whole labor of that Committee devolved upon Garrett Brown and myself. We worked like beavers. The other committees were equally industrious. Kind friends were not wanting to help us and cheer us in our labors, but we lacked experience, and of course labored to some disadvantage. The announcement or advertisement of the Exhibition as published in the county papers occupied about three squares, to speak in printers' phraseology. It looks meagre now, compared with the extended and flaming announcements of modern Exhibitions. There were but six committees, and they were composed of three members each: 1st On Ploughing. 2nd. On Agricultural Implements. 3d. On Stock. 4th. On Agricultural Products. 5th. Committee to prepare a report for publication. 6th. Committee of Arrangements. The ground used for the Exhibition was a lot back of what was then Hough's hotel, [now called the Brick Hotel]. The arrangements, hasty and imperfect it is true, were all made at last and the eventful day dawned, and it brought a great crowd of people, and they brought their stock and their produce, their huge apples and mammoth pumpkins, and, best of all, our farmers brought their wives and daughters, with their rosy cheeks and bright eyes, to gladden our hearts.³⁰ The Exhibition was a success. The Society was a success. A large number of our best farmers enrolled their names as members. From that hour the Bucks County Agricultural Society became one of the substantial institutions of our county.

"The venerable President of the Society, Samuel D. Ingham, delivered the address, which was published in the county papers along with the official report of the Exhibition, prepared by the Committee on Publication. The report made a little over a single column of the Newtown Journal. The latter paper in its issue of October 29, 1844, says:

"The Exhibition and Cattle Show which came off in this place on last Thursday fully equalled our most sanguine expectations. There have been so many large meetings this season, and the public mind is so taken up by political matters just now, that we were fearful a matter which strikes more deeply than all others at the great interests of the country, would be comparatively neglected. But in this we were agreeably disappointed. The people were then—the bone and sinew, as the politicians say.'

"So closed the first exhibition, which at that time occupied but a single day. The second was held at the same place on the sixteenth day of October, A. D. 1845. The address was delivered by Joshua Dungan. The attendance was large and the display better than the year before. The Society had made another step forward. The Reports of the Committees were longer and more carefully prepared.

"The third exhibition was held on the fifteenth of October, 1846. It was an advance on both of its predecessors. The display was very good, and the people were there by thousands. No premiums were awarded, but diplomas, handsomely engraved, were delivered to the successful competitors.

³⁰Mr. Paxson was just twenty years old at this time, and unmarried.

"This is as far down as I propose to trace the operations of the Society. Its career since that time is perhaps better known to others than to myself, and while it has been pleasant to refer thus briefly to some of the incidents connected with the foundation and early career of this flourishing institution, it must not be forgotten that the picture has also its shady side. The graves that have opened admonish us that strong as our institution now is, some of its firmest pillars, shaken with the storms of time, have fallen, and crumbled back to their kindred dust. Our first President, the Hon. Samuel D. Ingham, after a life of rare usefulness and purity, like a shock of ripe grain ready for the harvest, has been gathered to his fathers. Our country has produced few men equal and none superior to Samuel D. Ingham. With a calm, clear mind, richly stored and garnished by culture, he joined the charm of pleasant manners and a generous heart. He was probably the most scientific farmer in our county. His knowledge of agri-



From the Library of Bucks County Historical Society.

cultural chemistry, and of the nature and character of soils, was equalled by few in this or any other country. And while such men are not always the most successful farmers in a pecuniary view, we must remember that their knowledge is in a great measure the result of experiments—that experiments in agriculture are costly, and that while they seldom benefit pecuniarily the man who makes them, the knowledge that he thus obtains and imparts without money and without price to others, benefits and enriches them. To Samuel D. Ingham this Society owes a debt it can never repay. But we can cherish and revere his memory. We can keep alive the recollection of those graces of mind and heart that in former days charmed us by the very richness of their simplicity. We can imitate, feebly indeed, but still imitate, those christian qualities that endeared him to us in life, and leave a bright halo around his memory in death. I speak not the language of mere eulogy, rather the earnest utterance of truth. Samuel D. Ingham was one of my earliest and best friends. At the very outset

of my career, when the future was uncertain before me, and the great battles of life were still unfought, his voice of kind encouragement and approbation was among the first I heard. Coming as it did, from a man of his years and position, it cheered me in hours that would otherwise have been dark, and has left an impression upon my mind, no time nor circumstances can efface. In life, I loved him for his high qualities, and in death, I honor and revere his memory.

"Joshua Dungan, too, is gone. We miss his genial smile and hearty support in every useful public enterprise. He was one of the most prominent, as he was one of the ablest men, connected with the organization of this Society. As a farmer, combining the practical with the scientific, he had no superior in our county. He was a man, too, of fine literary tastes, and an accomplished and elegant writer.—Some of his addresses and essays read before this Society were models of their kind—replete with fine thoughts clothed in the language of elegant simplicity. After a life of usefulness he, too, sleeps with his fathers.

"Dr. Phineas Jenks, the man in whose brain the idea of organizing this Society first found a lodgement, meets with us no more. His venerable form, as we used to see it about Newtown, with that look of profound wisdom, which, like his cane, he always carried with him seems before me now. Kind hearted, a good physician, a good farmer, a good neighbor, and last, but most important of all, a genial Christian gentleman—he has gone, I trust, to that better land, where neither constitutional conventions³¹ nor agricultural exhibitions are needed.

"Jacob Eastburn, after filling with entire satisfaction for many years the responsible position of Treasurer, has also departed upon the same long journey, after having first, I have no doubt, laid up his treasures in that kingdom where the "moth does not corrupt, nor do thieves break through and steal." No one connected with the Society was more efficient and zealous than Jacob Eastburn. No one more faithfully performed whatever was committed to him to do. In his death the community has sustained a great loss."

The first constitution³² of the Bucks County Agricultural Society, adopted November 4, 1843, contained twelve articles as follows:

"Art. 1. The Society shall be styled the Bucks County Agricultural Society,³³ and shall consist of such persons as comply with the provisions of this Constitution.

"Art. 2. The attention of the Society shall be called to Agriculture, and all subjects connected with it.

³¹This is an illusion to the fact that Dr. Jenks was one of the four delegates from Bucks county to the State Constitutional Convention of 1838.

³²Printed in the *Newtown Journal and Workingmen's Advocate* of Nov. 7, 1843. Note the similarity to the old constitution of Feb. 12, 1821.

³³The name was amended later to Bucks County Agricultural Society and Mechanics Institute. The date of incorporation was September 16, 1857.

"Art. 3. The stated meetings of the Society shall be held on the first Mondays of November, February, May, and August, at such hour and places as the By-Laws may designate, and five members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

"Art. 4. The officers of the Society shall at present consist of a President, four Vice Presidents, Secretary, and Treasurer, to be elected annually at a stated meeting, but should an election not be held, it may take place at any after stated meeting; and any vacancy by death, resignation, or otherwise, may be supplied at any time, provided such vacancy shall have been announced at some previous meeting. The number of Vice Presidents may hereafter be increased, and such other officers appointed as may be found expedient. In all cases the officers chosen shall continue to exercise their functions until others are elected.

"Art. 5. It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Society, to preserve order, to state questions, to give the casting vote when the Society is equally divided, and to perform all such other acts as may appertain to his office. In the absence of the President, his duties shall devolve upon a Vice President.

"Art. 6. The Secretary shall keep a faithful record of the proceedings of the Society, and perform such other acts as the By-Laws may enjoin, or the transaction of the Society require.

"Art. 7. The Treasurer shall receive and pay all monies belonging to the Society, and keep a regular account thereof, and exhibit the same at the stated annual meeting, and at any other time when required; but he is to pay no monies except on the order of the President, attested by the Secretary.

"Art. 8. In the absence of an officer at any stated meeting, his place may be supplied pro tempore, by a vote of the Society.

"Art. 9. There shall be held annually a Show or Exhibition of Cattle, Sheep, and other animals, Domestic Manufactures, Implements of Husbandry; new and improved varieties of Fruits, Grain, Grapes, Roots, and other productions.

"Art. 10. Any person may become a member at a stated meeting by a vote of the Society, and complying with the requisitions of the Constitution.

"Art. 11. Every member shall sign the Constitution, and pay the sum of one dollar at the annual stated meeting; and thereafter such further sums as may be required by the By-Laws. And a member may at any time withdraw from the Society on paying such sums as may be in arrears.

"Art. 12. Amendments to this Constitution may be made at the annual meeting by a vote of two-thirds of the members present; and the persons attending this meeting, and furnishing their names to the Secretary, shall be considered as members."

The sixteenth annual exhibition was the most successful one experienced in the early days of the Society. By noon of the

second day about "ten or twelve thousand people had entered the enclosure." "The fair sex were out in their strength, and in the jam hoops were demolished or compressed without the least consideration." The reason for such a large turnout was the dedication of the new building and the presence of the famous Horace Greely, of New York City, who was scheduled to make the address of the day. The *Bucks County Intelligencer* of September 20, 1859 noted:

"The time fixed upon for the annual exhibition of the Bucks County Agricultural Society is near at hand. To-morrow the Fair will commence, and should the weather prove favorable there will undoubtedly be an immense crowd in attendance.³⁴ Exhibitors of horses will find posted on and about the exhibition ground, printed regulations giving full and explicit directions in regard to the manner in which the training track is to be used. These regulations will be strictly enforced by the managers, and exhibitors will save trouble and confusion by consulting and observing them. Regulations giving the general order of exhibition will also be posted up, to prevent confusion and disorder. A few words of caution to visitors will not be out of place. Extensive preparations of course will be made in and about Newtown to furnish amusement for the crowds of visitors at the Fair, in the way of concerts, side shows, and "doings" generally. And doubtless, pickpockets, gamblers, "patent safe" men, and devil's emissaries of all sorts, will not be scarce, and snares for the feet of the unwary will be spread in abundance. One of the best preservations against danger from such sources will be to keep sober; and another will be to put no rash trust in strangers."

The reports of this famous exhibition were, of course, printed in all the county newspapers. In an article of this nature it is quite impossible to review all of the forty exhibitions held by this society, nor is it necessary to do so, because nearly all of the books and records were turned over, at the dissolution, to the Bucks County Historical Society, where they are now assured of permanent preservation. Anyone interested can examine them any time that the library is open.

³⁴The 16th Annual Exhibition Of The Bucks County Agricultural Society, which was advertised to take place on the 21st and 22d instant, in consequences of the severe storm was postponed to Wednesday & Thursday, October 12th & 13th, when the same premiums already published will be offered to competitors, and under the same Rules and Regulations. Their beautiful new Building will be inaugurated, with an Address by one of the most distinguished speakers of the country. The friends of agricultural and industrial progress, everywhere, are invited to participate, as exhibitors and spectators. (*Bucks County Intelligencer*, September 27, 1859.)

AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION LAST WEEK.

"The Exhibition of the Bucks County Agricultural Society at Newtown on Wednesday and Thursday last was in every way successful and gratifying—completely restoring the position of the Society from the depression occasioned by the heavy storm on the days originally fixed upon. The weather was just right — and the roads good enough to make the travelling easy, and the consequence was a very large attendance of the citizens of the county — a full proportion of them being of the fairer sex. On Wednesday, the ground was still a little soft and slippery in places not reached by the sun, but in general the surface was in very good order for pedestrian travel and the display of horses upon the track.

"The display of articles in the various departments was very creditable to the productive abilities of Bucks county. The vegetables of different kinds would bear comparison with those shown at agricultural fairs in any county. — They were all of the production of Bucks county farmers, and not of professional gardeners. In the department of fruit, the display was not very large in quantity, but in quality it appeared to be very superior. We could not ask for handsomer or larger apples than most of those on exhibition. Of pears there were but a few, the season being nearly over, and of peaches none at all. There were several specimens of quinces, grapes, pomegranates, &c.

"The clatter of machinery of different kinds was incessant. Most, if not all of the implement makers and machinists of the county were on hand, with almost every conceivable variety of straw cutters, mowing and reaping machines, plows, harrows and horse-rakes. There was a small steam-engine, which was an object of considerable interest, and a number of force pumps and water-rams, which supplied the water used on the grounds for drinking purposes. The display of machinery was quite up to the usual standard.

"The number of neat cattle on exhibition was rather limited on the first day, but on the second day a good number of dairy cows were added to those already on hand, and the display was exceedingly fine. The horses turned out finely, and there was a fair display of pigs, sheep and poultry of different kinds. The reader will see the details of the exhibition in the reports of the committees which we publish in full in another place.

"There was quite a large number of persons present on the first day — nearly as many as generally attend when the exhibition is held during a single day. It had become known that Horace Greeley would speak on Thursday, and very many persons accordingly deferred their visit until that time.

"The second day of the exhibition opened favorably in every respect. The sky was clear, and a balmy southwest breeze seemed to invite everyone into the open air, to enjoy the beautiful Indian Summer day. From eight o'clock to noon along every road leading to Newtown there were long trains of carriages proceeding towards the exhibition ground. Newtown was soon literally jammed with crowds of people and horses and carriages



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INCORPORATED, APRIL, 1857.

STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

The Bucks County Agricultural Society AND MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

No. 197



One Share

This is to Certify that Stephen B. Cornell is a member of and entitled to One Share of the Capital Stock of the Bucks County Agricultural Society and Mechanics' Institute, subject to such annual or other contributions as may be provided for by the Society, or future By-Laws and Resolutions; transferable on the Books of the Society only on the payment of arrearsages, provided, it is approved by the Board of Managers.

In Witness Whereof, the said Society have caused this Certificate to be signed by the President and Secretary, and affixed the Seal of said Institute, this 26th day of Sept. 1866



Henry S. Linsley Secy.



Adrian Cornell Pres't.

SHARES, FIVE DOLLARS EACH.

without number. The scene outside the enclosure was exceedingly grand and enlivening. The booths and various shows did a lively business, and mammoth stage coaches and public carriages kept constantly rattling up to the gates, unloading scores upon scores of passengers. — For hours people poured through the several gates. Frequently large crowds of persons were kept waiting for their turn of ingress to the exhibition ground. By noon at least ten or twelve thousand people had entered the enclosure, and in and about the exhibition building and other points of attraction, the crowd was intense. The fair sex were out in their strength, and in the jam hoops were demolished or compressed without the least consideration. The several flags suspended from the building and the tents, waved gracefully in the breeze, and the spectacle presented was chequered and grand. All felt delighted that the exhibition had proved a complete success. The best order prevailed inside, and no accident occurred to mar the pleasure of the occasion. Considering the large crowd of people assembled, the order outside was also very good, there being but a moderate amount of drunkenness. Some pick-pockets and gamblers were on hand, but we did not learn that they met with much success.

"The exhibition of horses on the track attracted much attention. A fawn on exhibition, forwarded to Judge Jenks by Gov. Ramsey, of Minnesota, was the centre of attraction, and appeared to be a great curiosity to the ladies. Master Hagy, of Plymouth, Montgomery county, with a small dog harnessed to a little coach, produced much merriment. The lad, mounted in his miniature carriage, drawn by his canine nag, made several journeys around the tract in imitation of a regular Jehu, to the especial delight of Young America, who greeted him with vociferous cheers.

"The receipts from the sale of tickets and the entrance of carriages at the gate, during both days, amounted to \$1,825 — far exceeding those of any previous exhibition of the Society. Add to this, about \$300 from the rent or sale of refreshment stands, &c., and the whole income from the exhibition will exceed \$2,100.

"At half past one o'clock, the gentlemen present to deliver addresses mounted a platform at the east end of the new building, and a sea of up-turned faces, extending far beyond hearing distance, bore upon the speakers. The first speaker introduced to the audience was the Hon. David Taggart, of Northumberland, who delivered a brief, but eloquent and spirited address. Mr. Taggart was frequently applauded.

"The next speaker was the Hon. Horace Greeley, of New York. When his name was announced by the Chairman, there was a general closing up of all space around the speaker's stand, and the large crowd pressed forward until those in the midst of it were nearly pressed flat. There was a great desire to see and hear Mr. Greeley. Those who had read the descriptions given in the California newspapers of his personal appearance while in the Golden State could bear testimony to the truthfulness of their reports, if Mr. Greeley was attired while with them as he was on Thursday last. Mr. Greeley looks considerably older than he did when we saw him

last. He is much more fleshy than he was when he attended Beek's Exhibition in this county, four years ago, though he plainly shows the effects of age.

"Mr. Greeley's address was plain and simple, and entirely devoid of any attempt at eloquence or beauty of speech. — His remarks were mainly addressed to farmers, and he discussed the different modes of tilling the soil.

[Omitted here are nine paragraphs describing Greeley's speech.]

"We have hastily run over Mr. Greeley's remarks, not pretending to give his language. They were well received, and contained many practical suggestions and facts. — After he concluded his address he descended from the platform, and was at once surrounded by a crowd of our farmers, who cordially shook hands with him. He reached Newtown by way of Trenton in the morning, and returned to New York by the same route, in the afternoon. He had with him his old gray coat — identical coat that he carried with him on his recent overland journey. It looked much the worse for the wear, and was entirely buttonless, the Californians having cut every button off, for keepsakes of its wearer. It was examined with curiosity by hundreds."

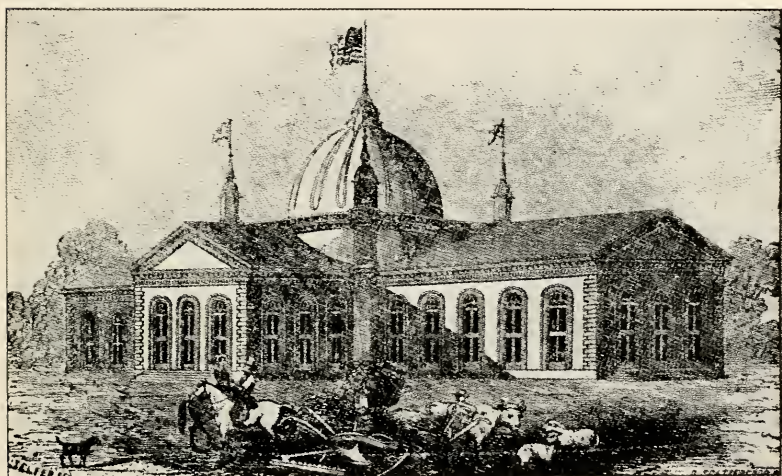
Because the later history of the Society has been treated elsewhere,³⁵ we will not dwell on it in detail at this time, but close the subject by saying that the business of the corporation was ended at the annual meeting in 1883, and the balance of \$3.92 remaining in the treasury was donated to Bucks County Historical Society.³⁶

³⁵Barnsley, E. R., *Historic Newtown*, pp. 96-100.

³⁶Thirteen years later the last physical evidence of the Bucks County Agricultural Society disappeared from the Newtown scene. The *Doylestown Democrat* of December 17, 1896, reported:

"The old frame structure in Newtown, known as the "Exhibition Building," was destroyed by fire Saturday night. [December 12, 1896.] The fire was discovered at about 9 o'clock, and in half an hour's time the building was a mass of ruins. Heroic and persistent work alone saved from destruction the double house nearby, on Lincoln avenue, occupied by John Bennett and Mrs. and Miss Tietjen. For a number of years the Exhibition Building has been used as a store-house, and at the time of its destruction it contained George B. Brown's steam threshing machinery, a rack wagon belonging to Warner & McGowan, manufacturers, and a small wagon of Harry A. Krusen's. Mr. Brown had his machinery insured in the Insurance Company of North America for \$1,300, which he says will cover about two-thirds of his loss. The building was the property of the Philadelphia, Newtown and New York Railroad Company, and was probably insured. It is thought that the fire was of incendiary origin, as Mr. Brown says that his machinery had not been in use for a week previous to the conflagration. The old exhibition building held a warm place in the hearts of many of Newtown's citizens. It originally stood on Washington avenue, and in it were held the Newtown exhibitions so well known thirty years ago. Within its walls were drilled many of the "brave boys and true" from Newtown preparatory to their leaving their homes for the war of 1861-65. At about 1865 it was

The next exhibition to be held in Bucks County was conducted not by an agricultural society but by one William Beek, an adventurous citizen of the Borough of Doylestown. He had fond hopes for his fair, but the elements of nature worked against him. In 1855, he put on a splendid display of four days duration, including what was probably the first baby show ever to be held at Doylestown, or elsewhere in Bucks County. "But that autumn a heavy gale of wind blew down the exhibition building, that was never rebuilt, and ruined the enterprising proprietor."³⁷ Again we must turn to the files of our local newspapers to uncover contemporaneous accounts of what actually transpired at this, the



BEEK'S EXHIBITION BUILDING, 1855.

From illustration in Davis' "Doylestown Old and New", p. 320.

first of several county-seat fairs. A Doylestown correspondent to one of the Philadelphia newspapers wrote colorfully:

"The absorbing theme among our citizens, at the present time, is the Mammoth Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition, which is to take place here in on the 21st, 22d, 23d and 24th of August. Splendid grounds have been provided for it, and permanent buildings erected thereon, which will undoubtedly excel in splendor and extent anything of the kind in the United States. The main building covers an area of 20,000 square feet, and is one hundred feet high to the apex of the dome, which is 60 feet in diameter.

moved on rollers to the location it occupied at the time of the destruction, where the annual exhibitions continued until 1873, since which time, as has been stated, it has been used for storage purposes."

³⁷W. W. H. Davis, *History of Bucks County*, Vol. II, p. 355.

It is lighted with windows 30 feet in height and 12 feet wide, and richly plastered and finished upon the interior. Gas works have also been erected in connection with it, and it will be lighted for evening exhibitions during the fair. A number of the heaviest manufacturers of Philadelphia have already entered goods in this department, and the display will, undoubtedly, be rich and beautiful. The grounds, which embrace an area of 30 acres, have been carefully graded at heavy expense, and enclosed with a firm and substantial fence, with four gates of entrance and exit. — The track for the trial of horses has been constructed with great care, and is half a mile in length, a feature which will probably induce an excellent exhibition of fine stock. Beck's Philadelphia Band has been engaged for the occasion, and will, undoubtedly, add greatly to its interest."

To the above, the editor of the *Bucks County Intelligencer* replied:³⁸

"The correspondent quoted above has omitted the most interesting part of the exhibition — the baby show.³⁹ This must not be lost sight of. The dear little creatures are being trained by their mammas to look nice in public. We understand that a vast number of babies have been entered to compete for premiums — among which are fat ones, lean ones, good, bad and indifferent. What a squealing time there will be, and what a grand sight for old bachelors! Who's got a baby to exhibit?"

"The splendid training track on Beck's exhibition ground is a novelty in this neighborhood, and frequently it presents the appearance of a miniature exhibition of 'fast nags' in the process of initiatory training. There is a great deal of fun attending these trials of speed, a crowd usually collects, and at times it would be difficult for a stoic to keep cool. One evening last week, a company of spectators became so much excited on witnessing the feats of a couple of fast horses, that they could stand it no longer. A foot race around the course was proposed, and instantly put in execution, when one of the party made his half a mile in four seconds less than two minutes. Here's time for you. This young man ought to hire himself out for a locomotive."⁴⁰

"A busy scene was presented in and about the Fair grounds yesterday. Throughout the day wagons loaded with every description of goods and

³⁸Issue of August 7, 1855.

³⁹"It is a matter of amusement to notice how the approaching baby show has disturbed the equilibrium of the old bachelors of Bucks county. They can't resist this infantile attraction and hundreds of these peculiar people will favor the show with their presence. Many of them afterwards no doubt will be willing candidates for matrimony, so ladies watch your chance. A bachelor from the lower end, with no soul in family but himself, in the height of his ecstasy, has invested \$5 in season tickets, ostensibly as a compliment to the indomitable perseverance and genius of the projector of this enterprise, but in reality because of his anticipated pleasure on feasting his eyes upon the representations of babydom." (*Bucks County Intelligencer*, August 14, 1855.)

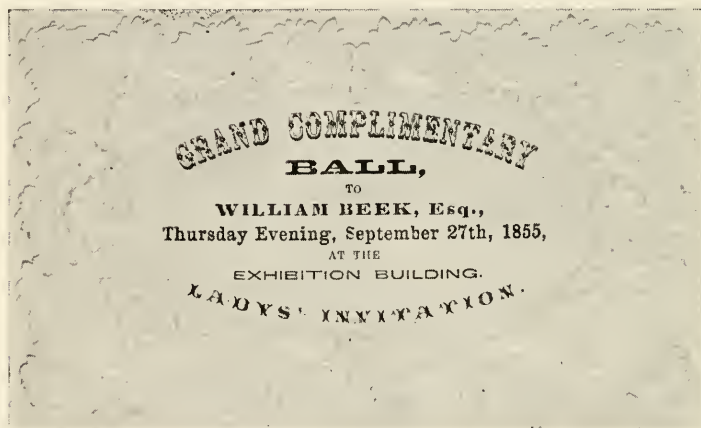
⁴⁰*Bucks County Intelligencer*, August 14, 1855.



HON. GEORGE G. LEIPER, OF DELAWARE COUNTY

This portrait of the president of Beek's Exhibition was painted by the late Samuel F. DuBois, of Doylestown, and it now hangs in the auditorium of Bucks County Historical Society.

articles for exhibition were entering the grounds and depositing their various contents. When we visited the building about noon, but a small portion of the space inside was occupied, but the remainder was rapidly filling up, and the display promised to be of much interest. Outside of the building but few articles were to be seen, and we suppose it is the intention to confine the mechanical display mostly within doors. We understand that nearly all the stalls for live stock, some three hundred in number, were engaged on Saturday evening, and that workmen are putting up additional ones. Refreshment saloons, stationary and on wheels, abound both inside and out of the enclosure; and numerous tents, occupied by magicians, showmen, &c., are scattered around. Everybody is taking advantage of the opportunity to turn a penny — small shows in abundance are clustering around the big one, and expect a proportionate share of patronage. Of the clouds of dust which envelop every vehicle passing to and fro, we will say nothing — they must be seen to be appreciated.”⁴¹



The original of this illustration was presented to Bucks County Historical Society by Miss Helen H. Ely, Newtown, Pa.

“The ‘Doylestown Universal Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition’ came off last week according to programme. The Exhibition commenced on Tuesday morning and was closed on Friday evening. It is estimated that from twenty-five to thirty thousand people visited the Exhibition. — We present to our readers the following particulars:

“The Exhibition Grounds were opened on Tuesday morning for the reception of visitors. The weather was auspicious — a clear sky overhead, and a cool breeze from the west, which occasionally wafted over those on their way to the grounds clouds of dust as it was stirred up by passing vehicles. On approaching the exhibition grounds from any point the visitor had ample opportunity of taking a glance at the outside shows, which lined

⁴¹*Bucks County Intelligencer*, August 21, 1855.

the road on either side, almost forming canvass villages, and their variety were equally imposing. At one place a large painting on the outside of the canvass displayed a huge "living crocodile" just in the act of biting the nether end of an affrighted darkey; further on was the "smallest living man" or the "greatest living curiosity," all represented in paintings true as life and twice as natural, and music playing inside to arrest the attention of the passer-by, and enveigle the shillings out of the pockets of the seekers after knowledge, while the pressing invitation of 'walk in, gentlemen, only a shilling,' could scarcely be resisted. The appearance of things seemed to indicate that these shows were doing but little business, and the countenances of their proprietors plainly expressed that unless they had more customers, in view of the ruinous rents they were paying, the Doylestown Fair would prove a bad speculation to them. The refreshment stands, eating establishments, &c., also were not doing much business. It appeared as if everybody came to the Fair with their stomachs well filled.

"The number of visitors inside was rather slim in the forenoon, perhaps not exceeding two thousand, and every one appeared to be more or less disappointed at the small attendance. Strangers were generally pleased with the display and arrangements within the enclosure, and many were quite astonished at the immensity and design of the exhibition building; they had no idea that the building was so large and beautiful.

"The inaugural ceremonies of the Exhibition appear to have been an address by the Hon. Horace Greeley, of New York. At three o'clock, the visitors were called to order in the area of the building, immediately under the dome, by Dr. Charles Huffnagle, presiding officer of the Exhibition. A letter was read from George G. Leiper, Esq., of Delaware county, in which he stated his inability to be present and preside over the Exhibition, in consequence of a sudden and afflicting bereavement in his family. The President then introduced to the assemblage Horace Greeley, Esq. Mr. Greeley rose and was greeted with applause. The speaker hesitated a moment, to have silence established; but this appeared impossible, for the place was the worst suited to hear that could have been selected, there being no seats for the audience, and the constant moving about of feet on the floor, rendered it impossible for any one fifteen feet off the speaker to hear what was said. This created great disappointment, and many persons who had seen Mr. Greeley for the first time, and who had come some distance to hear his address, had to content themselves with a sight of the distinguished stranger. This was exceedingly unpleasant to the audience, and discouraging to the speaker. Mr. G. remarked that the room was not the best suited to hear a speaker, and that his voice was too weak, from recent indisposition, to make himself heard any great distance, and hoped his hearers would be as quiet as possible. Mr. Greeley looked somewhat worn-out from hard service or recent sickness, and age, too, which is silvering what is left of his locks, is having its effect upon him. His appearance indicates close application, and hard, untiring attention to the columns of

The cut on the opposite page illustrates the first sheet of the famous Greely Manuscript in the library of Bucks County Historical Society. It is the address delivered by Horace Greely, Esq., (editor of the *New York Tribune*), at Beek's Exhibition, Doylestown, August 21, 1855. The following caption to the same was written by General W. W. H. Davis:

"Mr. Greely delivered the address without any notes, and after he was through, Hiram Lukens, then foreman of *The Intelligencer*, Doylestown, asked Mr. Greely for a copy of his paper. Mr. Greely said he had written no paper and therefore had no copy to give Mr. Lukens, and asked why it was that no stenographer was present to take down the speech if it was desired to have it printed in a newspaper afterward.

"Mr. Lukens explained that Doylestown was out in the country, and that Mr. Greely was not in the Tribune office, and it was up to him to write the speech out, because the people of Bucks county wanted to know what he said.

"Mr. Greely thought this was a great joke on himself, and sat down that night and wrote the speech. Although Mr. Greely's manuscript is notoriously illegible, Mr. Lukens took it and set the type himself, making only a few small typographical mistakes in the whole thing, as the proofs herein will show, and deciphering the manuscript in every case, although he had never seen any of Mr. Greely's copy before."

The by-tunes of the Greeley's Address
at the Fugate Town Convention
Aug. 21st, 1835.

Mr Greeley observed that this occasion seemed to indicate, as the proper subject of the opening Address, "Judicial Fair," their saying, his topic, purpose and tendency," and this surely is the topic I shall endeavor to exhibit.

The honor of perpetrating such Fairs is claimed by France; the period fixed for their origin is one of the years of comparative ^{calamity} ~~calamity~~ which followed the plunging of the great Revolution. When this first ~~French~~ Exhibition was held about 1795—it was intended to be repeated at stated intervals to complete a ten years; but was rooted Europe and absorbed public interest when the time for repetition arrived, and it was then decided that periodical Exhibitions could not be maintained. It was not till after the long peace which followed the ^{French} ~~French~~ that one of a lot of men I had recalled men's minds to the less exciting but more beneficial pursuits of art and industry, that Judicial Fairs, at intervals of seven or eight years, were re-established in Paris, and then ^{as} for French products. The idea of a triennial Exhibition was not even conceived until within the last decade. The honor of originating it is claimed, in his speech at the opening of the Exhibition now proceeding at Paris, by the same old man for France; it is also claimed, for this place, by the people of English Birmingham, who found with

the *Tribune*. He is not an eloquent speaker -- but his earnest, plain and unassuming style of delivery attracts the attention of his audience; while the spirit and sentiment of his addresses are such as every thinking man or woman might desire. The address was exceedingly instructive and entertaining."

"The Exhibition terminated on Friday evening about nine o'clock, the gas lights in the building having all gone out and left it in total darkness. The large assemblage of people dispersed to their respective homes, and Doylestown assumed its accustomed quiet, after four days of unusual excitement. Here and there during the night, boisterous revelry proceeded from fragmentary crowds where liquor had been flowing freely; but as a general thing quiet prevailed. Be it said to the credit of Doylestown, and Bucks county, that we have never seen such a large assemblage of people where there were less drunkenness and disorder.

"Of the Exhibition itself we may say more in some future number. The enterprise itself was a herculean work, undertaken as it was, principally by one enterprising individual; for there is no use concealing the fact that the whole affair was carried on under the auspices of Wm. Beek, Esq., a citizen of Doylestown; the enterprise was an emanation from his own brain -- he bore its burthens and alone shared its responsibilities. It was attended with a vast expenditure of money and great labor. It was no humbug. Mr. Beek fulfilled his engagement to the public, and under the circumstances, few men could have done better, or even as well. The number of visitors was not as great as may been anticipated by Mr. Beek, but yet we are glad to announce it was not a losing affair. We believe that the attendance from abroad would have been much greater if Mr. Beek had imitated Barnum, and paid more respect to the potency of printers' ink, and recognized the power of the press, saying nothing about courtesies. We are satisfied that proper notice of the Exhibition was not given in Montgomery, Chester, Lancaster and Delaware counties, and the neighboring counties of New Jersey. Where the Bucks county papers circulated, people were informed of the nature of the exhibition, and turned out."

"A balloon ascension was advertised to take place from Beek's Exhibition ground on Saturday afternoon, at three o'clock, a Mr. King to make the aerial voyage; and the entertainment to end with a display of fire-works. By some arrangement the ascension and fire-works took place about the same time. At the time announced for the balloon to go up, the balloon was not sufficiently inflated, from some difficulty in manufacturing gas -- nor was it sufficiently inflated to attempt a voyage among the clouds before about ten o'clock. The crowd assembled became impatient at the delay, and many departed in disgust. Finally, Mr. King, attached the car, entered it, and the balloon was let go, but there was not gas enough to lift him up, he being a man weighing about 150 pounds. A young man, an assistant of Mr. King, of the name of Marion, then proposed to go up. The car was detached in order to make the load as light as possible, a board was fastened to the ropes, and on this frail seat, without hat, coat or boots, the adventurous young man made his flight to the upper regions. The balloon went

up beautifully; and when up a few hundred yards, it apparently stood still. The grappling hook and rope were then thrown out to lighten the weight attached, and it then ascended rapidly, taking a northwest course, and was out of sight in a few minutes. The young man had no command of the balloon, having no ballast or grappling hook, and the rope connecting with the valve on the top of the balloon had drawn up beyond his reach, and he was obliged to await the expansion of the gas before he could descend.

"Much fear was expressed in regard to his fate. Nothing was heard from him until near noon on Monday, when he returned to Doylestown, having alighted on the farm of Jacob Eichlein, in Tinicum township, near Ottsville, on the Easton road, 12 miles from Doylestown. The whole time occupied by his trip was not more than thirty minutes. After rising through the first stratum of clouds, he saw above him, and passed through another, — soon after which he must have descended, as he heard what he supposed was the noise of Katy-dids. After securing his balloon he went to Eichlein's house for assistance, which was refused, and he was compelled to remain by it until morning, when he proceeded to Ottsville. Mr. King informs us that it is his intention to make another ascension from this place shortly."⁴²

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A history of the agricultural societies, public fairs, and exhibitions of Bucks county would be far from complete if the story of the Doylestown Agricultural and Mechanics' Institute was omitted. This Institute was established at the county seat to sponsor exhibitions in direct competition to the then very successful displays at Newtown under the leadership of the Bucks County Agricultural Society. We regret that neither time nor space permit a discussion of this interesting organization which flourished in central Bucks county for over twenty-five years, toward the end of the last century. Much original data pertaining thereto is to be found in the library of Bucks County Historical Society. So we will leave to another the writing of its history, together with that of the present highly successful Doylestown Fair.

We close, therefore, by quoting what General Davis had to say on the subject in his *History of Bucks County*:

⁴²*Bucks County Intelligencer*, August 28, 1855. The following account of Bucks County's first balloon ascension, taken from the *Pennsylvania Correspondent and Farmers' Advertiser* of December 26, 1820, was signed by Joseph Able and Henry Shrader: "The public are respectfully informed, that the subscribers will raise a Balloon from the jail-yard in Doylestown, on the first of January, (New Year's day) at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. The Balloon is about 16 feet in height and 48 in circumference. The citizens are respectfully invited to patronize the above to gratify their curiosity."

"In 1865, a chartered company, under the name of the 'Doylestown Agricultural and Mechanics' Institute,' bought the Beek tract, and that fall held a successful exhibition under canvas. The following year a convenient brick building, in the shape of a cross, each arm ninety-six feet long, and other improvements were made, including a half-mile trotting track, one of the best in the country. The society grew to be one of the most prosperous in the State, and for several years the display was extensive and valuable at the exhibition. The stock paid a dividend, and several thousand dollars were awarded in premiums. Like its predecessors, it came to an end. The society wound up its affairs about 1890; the property was sold, and, after paying the debts, the remainder was divided among the stockholders."

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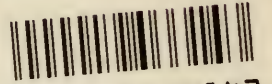
1. Semi-annual Fair of Bristol Borough, 1720-1796.
 2. Bucks County Society for Promotion of Agriculture and Domestic Manufactures, 1809-1812.
 3. Agricultural Society of Bucks County, 1820-1832.
 4. Bucks County Agricultural Society and Mechanics' Institute, 1843-1883.
 5. Doylestown Universal Industrial and Agricultural Exhibition, 1855.
 6. Doylestown Agricultural and Mechanics' Institute, 1865-1890.
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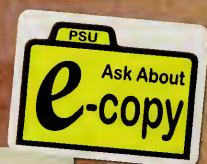
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